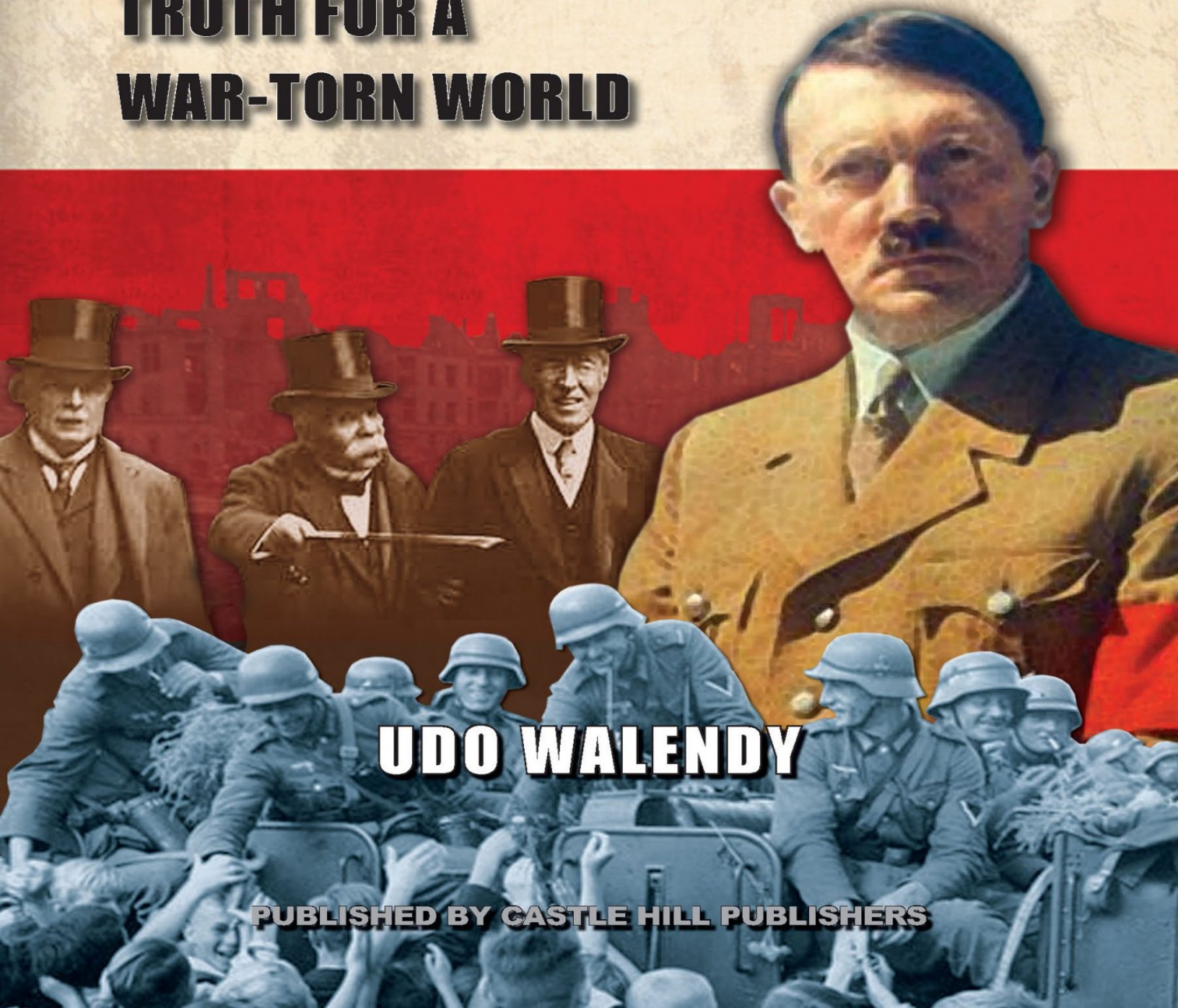
WHO STARTED WORLD WAR II?

TRUTH FOR A WAR-TORN WORLD



UDO WALENDY

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Who Started World War II?

Truth for a War-Torn World

By Udo Walendy

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Cover Illustrations: Background: silhouette of bombed-out German city after World War II. In front of it: British Prime Minister David Lloyd George (1963–1945, left), French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929, centre) and American President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924, right) on their way to the Versailles Peace Conference. Below: German troops are warmly welcomed by ethnic Germans after the liberation of the Sudetenland (1938).

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Editor's Foreword

How can anyone in his right mind ask who caused the Second World War? Everybody knows who did it:

Hitler did it.
The Nazis did it.
The Germans did it.
End of story. So why ask?

But since you've started reading this book, chances are that you know already that truth is rarely that simple, or are at least willing to hear arguments to that effect.

After the end of the First World War, the victorious powers insisted that Germany take the full blame for the outbreak of that conflict. It is true that it was Germany who declared war on France and Russia, and not the other way around. But it is also true, as most historians acknowledge today, that Germany was the only great power of those days who seriously tried to avert this war, and who tried to stop it with numerous genuine, reasonable peace offers once it had been unleashed. These propositions simply fell on deaf ears and further, were concealed or even denied by their recipients. Hence, it is not always the nation firing the first shots who is primarily responsible for the ultimate course of an armed conflict.

In late 1918, after the U.S. had proposed a reasonable basis for peace negotiations – US President Wilson's 14 Points – and after all powers involved had agreed upon it, Germany surrendered. But after the Germans had laid down their weapons, the other powers did not follow suit, as the armistice had provided. Quite to the contrary: The cease-fire agreement was repudiated and replaced with the plunder and rape of Germany in what is called the "Treaty of Versailles."

Ever since Germany had been forced at gunpoint to sign this "treaty," voices of reason could be heard all over the world stating that the conditions of this treaty must be revised, or else yet another major European conflagration would be inevitable. The greedy, hate-filled victorious powers, however, did not allow such a revision. Hence, when peaceful revisions failed, new tensions and finally a new war arose.

The Second World Wear is therefore nothing else but the continuation of the First World War. It is impossible to understand the second war without knowing the causes of the first war and how that war was ended. Both wars have to be seen as one unit, as a Thirty Years' War.

It was not the first Thirty Years' War on European soil – it was the second. The first happened between 1618 and 1648, when most of the great powers of Europe of that time – first and foremost the Church – struggled for control over the heart of Europe, that is: Germany. The consequences for Germany were devastating. It lost roughly one third of its population, mostly due to war-induced famines and epidemics, and became politically emasculated, unable to decide its own fate for two hundred years.

Even though the peace treaty which ended this first German catastrophe emplaced a national German paralysis for centuries, at least it didn't blame anyone for the war and instead ordered a general amnesty for all the atrocities committed by all sides during the conflict, allowing everyone a fresh start. As we all know, that was not the case after the second Thirty Years' War. First of all, there was no peace treaty with Germany, and there still isn't. In addition, Germany has been made to carry the imposed burden of exclusive guilt, and while all the victors' atrocities have been amnestied, denied and even forgotten, the vanquished nations are haunted to this very day by collective accusations, and their now-geriatric citizens who were involved in that war are still today in constant danger of being hunted down, dragged into show trials and thrown into prisons for crimes allegedly committed some 70+ years ago.

This second Thirty Years' War had at its core a similar motivation. After Germany had overcome the political castration of the first Thirty Years' War by uniting all northern and central German principalities under Prussian rule in 1871, it rapidly gained economic strength and was swiftly outcompeting all other great European powers. These powers in turn felt that they either had to control, weaken or even destroy this new, much smaller Germany in order to stop this apparently interminable German success story. The most radical proponent of that attitude was Great Britain. The UK saw its world dominance increasingly threatened by Germany, whose economic prowess had surpassed Britain's just prior to the First World War. Although Germany had repeatedly offered Britain her assistance

in maintaining the Empire, Britain was not willing to share her rule of the waves with her cousin Germany.

The Treaty of Versailles was designed to cripple Germany to the point where she would not be a serious competitor anymore. But Hitler derailed that plan. He reunited Germany, liberated her from the shackles of Versailles, and enabled Germany to economically rise from the ashes of Versailles with breath-taking speed. While the rest of the world continued to suffer from the Great Depression, Germany flourished and again outcompeted everyone within only a few years of Hitler's rule.

Hitler had to be stopped.
Germany had to be stopped.
The job left undone after the First World War had to be finished.

And so it was done, again primarily orchestrated by Great Britain, as the reader of this book will discover.

Looking back today, 100 years after the outbreak of this second Thirty Years' War, what were the consequences of this conflagration for Great Britain?

Let's face it: When trying to destroy Germany in two world wars, Britain bit off far more than she could chew. Sure, Germany's population was reduced by many millions by means of genocidal carpet bombings during the war and ethnic cleansings afterwards. Her territory shrank by one third. But Germany is still there, and she is thriving. On the other hand, the British Empire is gone, and the waves are now ruled by the US. Britain's economy has been outcompeted, nay, trounced once again by Germany, and vast parts of the surviving British industry today are in no small part controlled by German corporations. Europe is being ruled from its financial centre: Frankfurt, Germany.

Britain, of course, is relegated to keep celebrating her victory over her Germanic cousins… a victory today so much less than empty.

And one last thing I would like the reader to consider: The Germans live on both blessed and cursed soil. During peace, most European commercial and cultural trade runs through Germany, as it lies in the very centre of that continent. Hence, during peace, Germany thrives. It thrives to the point where its neighbours get envious. Unlike many other nations, however, Germany has hardly any natural borders offering protection, and it is the

country in Europe with the most contiguous neighbours – currently nine, and if we include Austria within Germany, even twelve. Hence, there is no spot in Europe where having envious neighbours is more perilous. And that is the reason for the German fate: pure geography. Any people living in such a location would face the very same exposure to political machinations by its neighbours. The reason for modern history's devastating wars in central Europe is therefore *not* because the Germans are a belligerent, evil tribe. The Germans are no different than anyone else. It is simply a matter of political geography, or *Geopolitik*, as the Germans say.

Germar Rudolf, 18 August 2014

Only the Truth Will Set You Free!

Building political structures that ensure lasting peace will necessarily call for open and unbiased dialogue, which itself depends on historical objectivity. Those who falsify other nations' history and at once refuse to consider their own past objectively and honestly deserve no trust. They have nothing to contribute to the quest for peace and justice in the world. It is the historian's duty for the sake of the past and the future to search for, to find, to defend, and to gain acceptance for those historical truths which will stand the test of time, irrespective of considerations of political expediency which can be elevated to the status of universal dogma with the support of the mass media and the help of governmental means of control. The blind adherence to politically motivated conclusions and the concealment of essential historical documents[1] can never help attain that objectivity which is indispensable to the quest for peace and the continued existence of humanity. The world today cannot afford to tolerate historical lies. Both the present and the future demand an uncompromising examination of the question of war guilt. The proverb "Might is right" offers no solution. Moreover, the warring parties to any future conflict will hardly acknowledge it as a precept of international law. A judgment can be constructive only if accepted by both sides as being based on fundamental and inalienable truths, and on a concordant interpretation of the law. Whoever does not also grant the principles of justice to Germany is clearly not amongst those who have truly perceived and understood what really happened in Europe and indeed in the world during the 20th century and who are now determined on making understanding, veracity, justice, honour and consequently peace itself politically effective.

Those who place all blame for the Second World War automatically on Adolf Hitler have neither grasped nor sought to identify the causes of the First World War or of the various conflicts that arose between 1918 and 1939. Thus, no answer is given either to the guilt question of previous wars, or to those that have been waged since 1945. Likewise, the tensions between the two superpowers during the Cold War cannot be explained either when placing guilt solely on Hitler and on the German people. To try and ultimately establish Hitler's war guilt as a dogma for all times is to

refuse those insights and connections which are fundamental not only for the war guilt question in general but which are of cardinal importance in laying the foundations for assuring the survival of present and future generations and nations. It is vital to discard political dogmas, prejudices, catchwords and slogans in order to achieve a fuller vision of history, of peoples, and of individual destinies, and to make unbiased judgment possible. To project guilt exclusively onto Germany is to lock humanity into a new mentality of hatred.

The Allied war and atrocity propaganda of the First World War was developed in the succeeding years of peace by the same politicians and press magnates, still at their posts, into spiritual guidelines both for their own and for the vanquished peoples. The same methods were again and are still applied, but in a perfected manner, during and after the Second World War. The claims of atrocity propaganda have become the "historical" basis of political opinion amongst civilised nations. Can it be surprising that our world finds itself in ever more dire political crises?

The appalling events of the Second World War can be properly judged only by submitting the political and military behaviour of both camps to the same criteria, and by acknowledging that the actions both of decision makers and of peoples are not solely the product of their free will, of a plan and of a premeditated objective, or, respectively, of one individual's good or bad intentions. Only after seeking to resolve the question of responsibility for the war in an objective manner and without preconception can one hope to arrive at a just verdict of this period. To this date no such effort has been undertaken by any official body.

The present study is so designed as to draw insights and knowledge from history and to render them constructively useful both for the present and for the future. A thorough understanding of history will require awareness and acknowledgement of the fact that political authority is principally a matter of power, so that a political leader – may he be a German one – may he be an Adolf Hitler – often has no choice but to also employ the same methods and means as are imposed upon him by the adversary: for without evenly matched armaments measures his actions would remain ineffective. It is, moreover, unjust to censure Hitler for having used such methods and means whilst leaving others who used them also exempt from blame.

Were the various measures taken by the NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers Party) typical of National Socialism or were they symptomatic of the time? The bloody communist revolts of the period, for their part, were the prelude to the formation of the Weimar Republic.[2] As early as January 1919, the leadership of the German socialist party SPD (Social-Democratic Party of Germany) organised volunteer militias which took up arms against the participants in violent insurrections and strikes that had brought general disorder to the Reich. The following list may serve as a reminder of the general presence of such uniformed militias in Germany during that time: "Red Front Fighting Unit," "Steel Helmet," "Reichsbanner Black, Red and Gold" (later known as the "Iron Front"), "Red Navy," "Volunteer Corps," "Werewolf," "Order of Young Germans," plus numerous other armed militia units. It should also be remembered that neither authoritarian leadership, nor dictatorial autocracy, nor vigorous state propaganda, nor the banning of opposition political parties, nor concentration camps, nor the imprisonment of political dissidents, nor anti-Semitism, nor rearmament and universal compulsory military service, nor special laws in a state of emergency, nor "the politics of power," nor military strategy, – nor war crimes – were inventions of Hitler or of the NSDAP, or of the German people. As a matter of fact, it seems that during the decades following 1945 these occurrences have still not been banished from the world scene. When these practices are used by governments in many parts of the world today, they seem to cause just as little revulsion as they did when they were adopted by Germany's enemies in the years from 1933 to 1945, or by any of the world powers before that time. That said, a one-sided morality will not help solve the political problems of today's world. In order to terminate the seemingly endless recurrence of injustice and suffering, a goal to which we all ought to devote all our efforts, it will be necessary to look beyond the confines of Germany.

The sovereignty of a nation includes the right to revolution, legitimising it in so far as it may enable the nation to put an end to internal chaos and effectively enhance the nation's prestige in the international arena. This is all the more legitimate when a political party has obtained power in a legal manner. Whatever reasoning might be applied for judging this matter, it must not be coloured by the national interests of any particular state, but should rather adhere to ethical principles that are equally valid and binding

for all nations. Nor can a just assessment be developed in the shadow of events arising from an all-out war of annihilation. Research in history obliges one to confront a myriad of dreadful facts.[3] But this does not exempt us from the obligation to find standard criteria for historical assessment, criteria that can be found only with a comprehensive, impartial, objective view of history, taking into account all essential aspects. The war guilt question stands at the centre of the debate. In the epoch of world wars and eternal wars on terrorism this problem has more than ever before become a matter of might, of dogma and of world view. One cannot escape the impression that the emphasis frequently is not so much on a search for the truth of this question but rather on an effort to interpret the war guilt in such a way as to serve certain interests. Is it any wonder, then, that national or "world proletarian" interests decide on the interpretation and appreciation of secondary historical factors?

A declaration of war in the absence of any violation of national rights and interests, as well as war policies designed to exacerbate hostilities and to steer them toward another country, are deeds that should greatly influence any historical judgment. After all, these deeds are the motives and immediate causes which brought about the death of some 55 million human beings during the Second World War; all other events are but consequences.

On September 3, 1939, England and France declared war on Germany. In so doing they transformed a limited territorial dispute between Poland and Germany over the city of Danzig into a world war, although this dispute could easily have been resolved through negotiation. The real significance of these events can be revealed only by an analysis of the apparent muddle of causes and effects that induced the great European democracies to opt for war rather than to seek conciliation. Moreover, we cannot have a just idea of the situation if, for example, we ignore the main war crimes committed by Germany's opponents before or after September 3, 1939 (see footnote 64, p. 54), or, if we do not take any account of the fact that the Soviet Union decided to wage war against Germany (for the destruction of Fascism in order to extend the world revolution) in May/June 1940, *i.e.* a year before the start of Germany's campaign into Russia (a decision which was publicly admitted by the Soviets 13 years after the end of the war – see pp. 367ff.).

The present volume tries to unlock the historical insights that are necessary in order to learn lessons from our past and to draw conclusions

for the future of mankind – in order to avoid a third world catastrophe. The facts thus exposed will perhaps reawaken old national resentments in the lands of the winners, discrediting dogmas cemented by decades of propaganda. In any case, the free and open discussion of questions of destiny, questions that are crucial for humanity, for the European nations and for the German people, cannot rightly be denied by way of a peremptory invocation of the National Socialist policies toward the Jews during the last war. A German national must be allowed to defend his nation and thus himself against the accusation of guilt cleaving to Germany's name. He must, therefore, be allowed to strive fully committed to world peace – equipped only with his intellectual resources.

Clarification of the War Guilt Question: A Prerequisite for Future Peace

During the 20th century, two world wars have swept over the European continent like hurricanes. Death and misery have left the survivors horror-stricken. Countless cities were crushed into piles of rubble and ashes. Imbued with idealism and belief in a just cause, armies were bleeding to death on all fronts. Women, children and old people found their graves buried under the bombs and phosphorous of enemy squadrons. Millions upon millions suffered their undeserved lot with dogged and silent determination. Countless destinies have been transformed by these senseless tragedies.

Who was responsible for all this horror? One man? A gang of criminals? Several gangs? One nation? A "world conspiracy" of "capitalists," "Jews," "Fascists," "Communists"? Or, and this question needs to be asked too, is it the whole human race marked by "original sin"? The will of God? Did nature with its still largely hidden laws arrange for those tiny particles – we human beings – to battle eternally on this planet Earth; this immense planet that fades into obscurity in the vastness of the cosmos? In that case, is there no guilt at all? Is it fate or the will of God, or the random selection of human free will that shape our historical development? Are victory and defeat merely the expression of a judgment handed down by history in regard to individuals and nations? In this world, do we only find triumphant the honourable, the noble, the just, the loving, the compassionate and – progress?

Only reason can enlighten us with respect to these elementary questions. Faith is not able to supply the answer. When faced with the misery and gravity of the situation, the millions of killed and wounded, the war-stricken nations, then each one of us is reminded to unravel the problems of the past – to do it with honesty and objectivity and with courage and vigour. It goes without saying that the scientific method should be used here.

Scientific analysis demands a mind without prejudice and immune to the pressures of political power. Humanity no longer has any use for theories, hypotheses and contradicting schools of thought. We have come to realise that it is neither faith, nor scientific or political teaching, nor any

philosophy that has ever given us a reliable assessment or a clear, unambiguously correct answers when probing the world and its displays. It is therefore essential to critically evaluate all those beliefs and tenets which, especially in the political field, are deeply entrenched and defended with such intolerance. Insanity, stupidity, megalomania, profiteering, barbarism, miscalculations and the losing of one's nerves can no longer be accepted by any nation as a possible explanation for the causes of the two world wars. The consequences are far too gruesome, the inconsistencies of the testimonies too obvious.

Not enough of the ravages of the past, not enough of the experience of the two world wars, not enough of the misery in one's own country and in other countries – only a few years had gone by since the most dreadful of all wars, and the threat of a third world war was looming for decades during the Cold War. And hardly was that virtual war over, next came the "eternal war on terror" with is current catastrophes and calamities. Despairing when faced with this pitiless reality, we search for rescue, for a convincing answer to our agonising questions: Why must nations always be at odds with one another? Does war perhaps come about regularly in order to check the continuous propagation of the human race? Is there any justice or mercy in nature? Did our forebears deliberately choose to move from one period of destitution to another when, in fact, they could have opted for peace? Throughout the ages they have longed for freedom, equality, fraternity, for happiness. Were their declarations of peace mere idle prattle, just empty phrases, used to deceive the nations? Did not each generation vie anew with their fathers to surpass them with more altruism and more love of thy neighbour?

Youthful idealism always seems to have been smothered. Once more, history has denied noble motives. What then do we, today's young generation, expect? Who will dare vie with his forebears and deem his own wisdom greater than theirs?

If we really had wanted to improve on our ancestors' efforts for peace, we should have succeeded long ago in banishing the threat of war for all times, especially since, on the one hand, we now have at our disposal all possible means for bringing about a reciprocal understanding between nations, while, on the other hand, never before have so many people realised the utter futility of war. Two unimaginable gruesome wars on a global scale "to

rid the world of war," – two wars "to make the nations fit for democracy," – two wars for "getting rid of tyranny," – two wars "to gain acceptance for humanitarianism" – were without success. Each time the results were such as to bring about an increase in injustices, more disagreements and more disputes amongst the nations. The slogans, the propaganda, the dishonesty, the selfish attitudes, the denial of people's rights to self-determination and the merciless, hate-filled and shameful policies of destruction, all pursued in the name of feigned humanitarian values, were those appendages and consequences which appear today more obvious and which are now more irreconcilable than ever before, in spite of a changed balance of power. The path of history has never been a path of common sense or fairness, nor has it ever been a path of fraternity, of magnanimity or of true advancement.

Fabricated war guilt notions, enforced by intolerant power politics, served as a starting point and a justification for the system of rules created by the military victors after both World Wars. In spite of the fact that historical research has refuted these views, despite the obvious flagrant violations of the right to self-determination, despite the installing of "democratic," even "most democratic" social structures, the post-war political structures aborted freedom of opinion, of teaching, and especially of action on the crucial war guilt dogma – notwithstanding its vital importance for the destiny of nations, for the political climate and for the international order.

A look back into history gives rise to the question: Has the world changed over the centuries? Were the previous forms of government very different from today's? Although many historical situations repeat themselves, with different nuances and under changed names, with different banners and changed value systems, today's conditions are essentially different in the following respects:

1. The intellectual level and social attitude of the educated citizen.
2. The public spirit of modern society.
3. The catastrophic dimensions of a modern warfare;
4. New problems posed by the magnitude of such a war (destruction of all established values, danger of mass suicide).
5. The expectancy and the experience of various forms of government.
6. The structures of international co-existence of nations.

What else might be done besides creating international arbitration bodies such as the League of Nations and the United Nations Organization, with their various subsidiary organisations, to settle international disputes peacefully? These institutions were not created to lull to sleep the nations of the world, but were meant as a wake-up call for an international conscience! Even though their ideas, undertakings, *modus operandi*, and constitutions more often than not, indeed in part quite fundamentally, deviated from the demands of international politics and from international law, the existence of these institutions should be fully acknowledged.

Every politician must take into account the sovereign will of statesmen of other countries. International co-operation requires voluntary consent between them. Needed is a power transcending national limits, a law transcending national limits, a system of values transcending national limits. If peace is constantly endangered throughout the world, is it due to a want of goodwill amongst men? Possibly a world government might be able to open new paths by which to maintain peace. However, it would have to be based on the trust of all nations. The establishment of such trust would, for its part, begin with an objective assessment of common historical experience (notably with regard to those statesmen and political systems that the law of fate has allowed to be destroyed), and end with an understanding of the dynamics of causality to which mankind is subject. To these conditions must be added the duty to hold fast to universally binding values. In the twentieth century, however, the practice was developed that the guilt or innocence of former warring opponents is decided upon by the use of arms, and the world organisations were established each time by the victorious military coalition. The organisations thus formed have at all times striven to maintain as official their own partial account of history and to impose the political order thus derived on an "international level," labelling it as "international" and "in accordance with international law."

Thus we find that up to now the world organisations have always refused to adopt an objective attitude of non-partisanship and to commission historical research in order to uncover the truth. They have also strongly opposed any modification of the *status quo* that would demand justice and historical truth and with it the conditions for peace. It is not by chance that these institutions have not enjoyed the trust of all nations, nor make their codes binding for all. After military defeat, the victor would routinely

dispute the legal system of his formerly equal enemy to the point of declaring him a criminal. Such methods are contrary to international law and inhumane, if not to say "criminal" itself, and will hardly solve any problems in the future. The world powers, who alone can be expected to launch new major wars, must engage in dialogue on an equal footing. Both the politician, in looking to the future, and the historian, in confronting the past, must work in such a spirit.

War as a reality is not merely an entity of the past, but requires a constant state of alert in all countries today and tomorrow. The fundamental problems that it poses are timeless. Any attempt at clarification must be made without attachment to time, place, power or ideology.

A world war is a tragedy for the whole human race, not just one nation or one political party. The causes of war cannot be clarified by preventing yesterday's opponent from speaking and reminding him of his defeat. All of mankind wants to be heard. It has a right to be heard. For the sake of the past and the future it even becomes a duty of politicians and of historians to listen to its voice.

The mammoth proportions of the World Wars pushed the question of war guilt and of expiation of this guilt to the centre of attention in public opinion worldwide. Napoleon's banishment to Elba and St. Helena allowed the question of guilt to be set aside, but in the twentieth century too many violent passions had been aroused, insisting on an investigation into the causes, clamouring for a verdict and for future protection. The millions of those killed in the war, the wounded, the homeless, the oppressed, the refugees from the east, are entitled to the condemnation of those guilty of the war. They are entitled to the respect to be shown for their own personal rights and the rights of their nations. The absence of any international court proceedings and, especially, of any objective international investigative committee charged to discover the causes of the First World War have facilitated the subsequent outbreak of a Second World War. Although it would have been wishful thinking to hope to deter future politicians from waging war on pain of death, the knowledge of those causes and their guilty agents, as well as the improved standards of international law, could have prevented a new catastrophe. The year to repair that neglect was 1945.

The blame for this neglect after the First World War, however, lies not with the German nation or any German government, for when the German

side repeatedly demanded a neutral – *i.e.* an international – commission of historians for an investigation of the war guilt question and offered, at the same time, to grant access to all archives and documents, this was spurned by the Versailles victor states. Nor did the victorious powers exhibit a burning desire to guarantee justice and equality amongst the nations for the sake of a future peace.

Professor Sven Hedin, the renowned Swedish scholar and East Asia explorer, once wrote appropriately:

> "In studying modern history, one can rarely state with certainty that a war between two countries or two blocs of nations actually began at the moment when war was declared or when the first shot was fired. Take the two world wars swamping the present generation, where the events which finally made war inevitable go far back in time. The shots at Sarajevo were not fired by mere chance, but their sound ruptured the dark clouds which had been brewing over Europe for some time.
>
> Even less did the Second World War begin on the 1st September 1939, at that precise moment when German troops were crossing the Polish border. It was born of the First World War, at that hour at the latest when the representatives of thirty-two nations gathered in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles to endorse a document that was touted as a peace treaty without being one."[4]

And a German historian has stated:

> "The popular idea according to which a war starts with a declaration of war is only partly accurate. There are intermediary stages between war and peace to which neither of the two concepts applies. It is for that reason that such provisional expressions as 'undeclared war' and 'cold war' have been invented."[5]

On the basis of previous experience, the historian can therefore recognise "the dark clouds" which presently threaten mankind. He need not even wait for the first shot of a new war before being able to assess and evaluate the given matters of conflict and the legal positions amongst the nations involved.

Historians and scientists have a duty to note in time the causes of wars of the past, of the present, and of the future, and thus averting future wars.

Versailles 1919 and the Question of War Guilt

The question of war guilt for the First World War has neither been perceived as having inevitable consequences nor has it been treated as such to this day. It has served instead as a means to promote the victors' power interests, resulting in permanent discrimination, deprivation of rights, the carving up of territory and the pilfering of resources of the vanquished. Under the pretext of war guilt, moral decency, trust and the rights of peoples are eclipsed, leaving fertile ground for future conflict. "World public opinion," thus far, has not grasped this.

In contradiction of the 14 point program drafted in the course of the negotiations leading to the armistice in 1918, France and Great Britain imposed conditions upon the German people that violated the fundamental principles of international law. In the terms of the Versailles victor's dictate, Germany bore full and exclusive responsibility for the war. She was subsequently held liable for reparation of all damage done. The Versailles dictate became the "foundation of law," the "law of nations" providing the rule of order amongst the European nations. Lies, economic exploitation for an indefinite period, annexation, forced assimilation and the oppression of ethnic minorities, the expropriation of other nations' colonies, compulsory demilitarisation, submission to foreign governments, military occupation and numerous other instances of wrongful and arbitrary treatment were thus "legalised" by the victors. In consequence the very ideas of "law," "democracy," "agreement," "truth," "self-determination," "freedom" etc. were subverted. Anyone who called into question these acts of the "civilised nations" was accused of "violation of law," "revisionism," "revanchism" and considered a warmonger.

The authority of this "ruling" is derived from the "war guilt paragraph" (§231) of the Versailles "treaty" and moreover from the Allies' explanatory letter of 16 June 1919 to the German representatives (*Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the observations of the German delegations on the conditions of peace*), published as a preface to the treaty. It reads, in part:

> "...In the view of the Allied and Associate Powers the war which began on August 1, 1914, was the greatest crime against humanity and the freedom of peoples that any nation, calling itself civilised, has ever consciously committed. For many years the rulers of Germany, true to the

Prussian tradition, strove for a position of dominance in Europe. They were not satisfied with that growing prosperity and influence to which Germany was entitled, and which all other nations were willing to accord her, in the society of free and equal peoples. They required that they should be able to dictate to and tyrannise a subservient Europe, as they dictated and tyrannised over a subservient Germany.

In order to attain their ends they used every channel in their power through which to educate their own subjects in the doctrine that might was right in international affairs...

As soon as their preparations were complete, they encouraged a subservient ally to declare war against Serbia... In order to make doubly sure, they refused every attempt at conciliation and conference until it was too late, and the world war was inevitable for which they had plotted, and for which alone among the nations they were fully equipped and prepared.

Germany's responsibility, however, is not confined to having planned and started the war. She is no less responsible for the savage and inhuman manner in which it was conducted.

They were the first to use poisonous gas... They commenced the submarine campaign ... They drove thousands of men and women and children with brutal savagery into slavery in foreign lands. They allowed barbarities to be practised against their prisoners of war from which the most uncivilised peoples would have recoiled.

The conduct of Germany is almost unexampled in human history. The terrible responsibility which lies at her doors can be seen in the fact that not less than seven million dead lie buried in Europe, while more than twenty million others carry upon them the evidence of wounds and sufferings, because Germany saw fit to gratify her lust for tyranny by resort to war.

That is why the Allied and Associated Powers have insisted as a cardinal feature of the treaty that Germany must undertake to make reparation to the very uttermost of her power; for reparations for wrongs inflicted is of the essence of justice...

The Allied and Associated Powers therefore believe that the peace they have proposed is fundamentally a peace of justice. They are no less certain that it is a peace of right fulfilling the terms agreed upon at the time of the armistice."

The victorious powers frustrated all serious attempts of clarifying the causes and the motives of the First World War, along with their practical application to politics. Since the 1920s no serious historian has defended the claim of Germany's exclusive responsibility for the war. Yet the repeated protests and requests by successive Weimar governments seeking rehabilitation of their country through a revision of the "official" version invariably met with outright rejection, effectively justified by nothing but "power." None of the victors of Versailles based any of their charges against Germany on specialists' reports, let alone did they reduce or retract the charges with the emergence of later findings of historical research. In this regard, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George declared at a meeting of the Reparations Commission in London on 3 March 1921:

"German responsibility for the war is fundamental to the Allies. It is the basis on which the Treaty has been established, and if this basis breaks down, or should be abandoned, the Treaty would be destroyed ... Therefore, we wish to make clear, once and for all, that German responsibility for the war has definitely been established and must accordingly be dealt with by the Allies."[6]

This label of culpability was necessary so that the victors could not be indicted with their own immoral actions. Only in this way was it possible to continue considering as valid, "legitimate" and irrevocable all of the "punishments" meted out against Germany in the form of territorial cessions, discriminations, reparations,[7] confiscations, control rights etc.

"The future is in your hands!"

With those words Raymond Poincaré, President of the French Republic, greeted the representatives of 27 nations at the opening of the Versailles peace conference on 18 January 1919. These words were to take on historical significance. The reason for the disastrous outcome of this peace conference was not due to the "harsh" conditions laid upon the German nation, but rather because an unjust ruling in international law was created in the shape of the Versailles "treaty" – signed by a German government under threat of military occupation. There were politicians both in Germany and abroad who could already foresee the inevitable consequences of this "Peace Treaty." Phillip Scheidemann of the socialist party SPD, at that time Chancellor of the Reich, said in May 1919:

> "I come straight to the point: This thick volume in which hundreds of paragraphs begin with: 'Germany renounces,' 'renounces,' 'renounces'! – this terrible, deadly weapon is being used to extort from a great nation an admission of its own unworthiness, an agreement to a pitiless dismemberment, the acceptance of enslavement, this text must not be allowed to become a statute book for the future ...
>
> What hand should not wither, binding us with these chains, yet still they want us to work like slaves for international finance, to do socage [labour for the feudal lord] for the whole world.
>
> The government of the Reich considers this treaty unacceptable. Unacceptable to such a degree that, still today, I cannot believe that the world could tolerate a text such as this without the sound of millions upon millions of voices echoing throughout every land and every party: Away with this murderous plot!"[8]

Many notable politicians from France, Britain, Italy and other countries, in 1919 and in the years soon afterwards, were already stating with urgent insistence that the "Versailles arrangement," particularly as concerned the borders between Germany and Poland, could only lead to a new war.

The former U.S. Secretary of State Robert Lansing stated, as quoted by Francesco Nitti, head of the Italian government:

> "'The victors intend to impose their combined objectives on the vanquished, and to subordinate all other interests to their own. European politics, as established today, are prey to every sort of greed and intrigue, only called upon to declare just what is unjust. We have a peace treaty, but it will not bring lasting peace, because it is founded on the shifting sands of individual interests.

‘In this judgment,’ Lansing added, ‘I was not alone. A few days after, I found myself in London, where I was discussing the treaty with some of the leading men in Britain. They all agreed that the treaty was absurd and unworkable, that it was born of intrigue and shaped by greed and, therefore, was more apt to cause wars than to prevent them.”[9]

Nitti himself said around the same time:

“A serious and durable peace has never been built on the plunder, the torture and the ruin of a defeated nation, let alone a defeated great nation. And it is precisely this which the Treaty of Versailles represents.”[9]

The British Labour Member of Parliament J.W. Kneeshaw commented at his party’s conference of 1920 in Scarborough:

“Should we have been the defeated nation and should such conditions have been imposed upon us, we would, instead of a calm engagement, begin in the schools and homes to prepare our children for a retaliatory war to shake off the intolerable, unbearable victors’ yoke. These conditions have amounted to a plot not only against Germany, against Austria and the other defeated nations, but also against the whole of civilisation.”[10]

The Dutch Ambassador to London, René van Swinderen, stated to the British diplomat E. Howard:

“The Versailles peace conditions contain all the germs for a just and lasting war.”[11]

U.S. President Wilson stated in 1919:

“How can, for instance, a power like the United States of America – since I cannot speak for any other – 3,000 miles across the ocean, sign this Treaty, withdraw from Europe, and tell the people in America that a peace treaty has been created for the world, while its content cannot be viewed as lasting. I have felt it incumbent upon me to withhold my signature.”[12]

Is it at all surprising that the Weimar Republic rejected the victors’ demands for the extradition of “war criminals” – only Germans, of course! – and then allowed one of the most prominent amongst the “criminals,” Field Marshal von Hindenburg, to be elected President of the Reich twice – in 1925 and 1932?

All governments during the Weimar Republic, irrespective of political orientation, denied the legitimacy of the Versailles dictate’s grave accusations and of its consequences for their country, calling time and time again for a fair judgment to be made by an impartial Court of Justice. Always in vain! The great powers simply did not response. The trust amongst the nations involved thus remained impaired. Versailles was the irresponsible provocation that summoned a nation to gather all of its defensive forces available and mould them into a united front, the better to fight this injustice not only with words but also with deeds.

An Englishman, Lord Buckmaster, admitted that,

> "to induce any nation, however evil and abominable they might be, to lay down their arms on one set of terms and then, when they were defenceless, to impose another set, is an act of dishonour which can never be effaced."[13]

But, this was not the only thing that took place. On 7 October 1928 Lloyd George conceded in a speech at the Guild Hall in London:

> "The entire documentation which certain people among our Allies have placed before us was made up of lies and is a swindle. We have ruled [in Versailles[14]] on the basis of forgeries."[15]

At the session of 8 May 1919 at the peace conference at Trianon Palace, the Allied delegates confessed that they had not the slightest notion of the problems of central Europe.[16]

Yet none of these shocking facts led to any change in the situation.

The governments of those countries had given their word to the world and to Germany, and they broke it time and time again. Germany had laid down her arms in November 1918, trusting that the conditions of the Fourteen Points made by U.S. President Wilson would be honoured, since Lloyd George for Britain and Clemenceau for France (as well as the United States of America) had committed themselves to them in a pre-armistice agreement. The Allies completely ignored their obligation. The armistice agreement was violated at the very outset with the continuation of the blockade against Germany. The Allies repeatedly breached their "Peace Treaty" thereafter, in the absence of any provocation by the German government, and at a time when Adolf Hitler was just entering the political arena.

The violations against this pre-armistice agreement by the Versailles "Treaty" were:

1. Failure to respect the Reich's sovereignty and the denial of the right to self-determination for its population in contested border regions (Eupen-Malmedy, Alsace, parts of East Prussia and all of West Prussia).
2. Annexation of parts of Upper Silesia by Poland in spite of a plebiscite in favour of remaining a part of Germany.
3. Poland's violations of the borders drawn up at Versailles.
4. Annexation of the Memel territory by Lithuania without plebiscite.
5. Misappropriation of Germany's colonies contrary to article 5 of Wilson's Fourteen Points as the one confirming "impartial

regulations."

6. Non-observance of the minority rights of the separated ethnic Germans, despite contractual assurances.
7. Military occupation of the Ruhrort, of Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Mühlheim, Oberhausen and other West German cities in March 1921, and the relocation of the customs border; military occupation of the Ruhr area in January 1923 by France.
8. Prohibition of a Customs Union between Germany and Austria (to say nothing of the prohibition of unification of the two countries).
9. Non-compliance with the disarmament guarantee.
10. Additional resolutions of the Council of the League of Nations to further restrict the "freedom" of Danzig.[17]
11. Expulsion of ethnic Germans who were compulsory separated from the territories detached from the German Reich; by 1922 their numbers had already reached one million, not counting those interned by the Allies:

–200,000 Expatriates and Germans in her former colonies;
–120,000 Germans of Alsace-Lorraine;
–500,000 Germans, refugees and exiles from West Prussia, Posen and Eastern Upper Silesia;
–100,000 Germans from Russia and the Baltics.

The countries in question never took stock of the grave consequences of these facts. Brave voices raised here and there were stifled by the wave of blinding hatred of anything German. In those lands the showing of hatred for Germany seemed to have become a way to demonstrate character and good citizenship, in keeping with the international or rather "European" political standard. Not troubled in the least by the various critics, the victorious powers continued to regard their "treaty" as a means by which to conduct their general anti-German policy. Germany remained weak, dismembered, strife-torn, isolated from foreign affairs, economically ruined and under constant military threat from her neighbours.

Danzig, Posen-West Prussia, Upper Silesia and Eastern Silesia, Memel, the Saarland, Sudetenland, Hultschin, Eupen-Malmedy, North-Schleswig, South Tyrol and Alsace-Lorraine[18] – the "treaty" had stripped Germany of all these territories, turning them into detonators of conflict along her

borders that made a reconciliation between the German nation and her neighbours still more difficult, if not impossible. Indeed, a coalition of hostile European states could be mustered against Germany at any given moment.

Adolf Hitler declared in a speech to the Reichstag on 17 May 1933:

> "The hopes of restoring an international conception of justice have been dashed by the [Versailles] Treaty, because in order to justify all the measures of this dictate, the Allies had to brand Germany with the mark of guilt [for the war]. This procedure is both simplistic and impracticable. In future, the guilt for a conflict will always be borne by the defeated since the winners are always able to impose their own diagnosis. This practice leads thus to a dreadful result, because it gave them a reason for changing a balance of power as existing at the end of that war into a permanent legal fixture. Thus the concept of victor and vanquished became officially the foundation of a new international legal and social order."[19]

It took until the year 1958 before Europeans learned of the, hitherto solitary, appearance of some form of self-criticism emanating from official Paris:

> "The full burden of the [Versailles] Treaty fell on Britain and France and the newly created states in Eastern Europe that could scarcely manage their own problems. The victors were neither strong enough to impose their will upon the vanquished, nor magnanimous enough to seek reconciliation with them. In spite of the idealistic internationalism of Geneva, no constructive European policy came about, and so constant use was made of stop-gap measures in order to maintain a dubious balance of power.
>
> The entire tragic nature of the period between the two World Wars is expressed in the failure of the League of Nations.
>
> Germany above all had cause to assume a suspicious attitude toward an organisation that was based on the coalition of the victors.
>
> France had attempted to impose coercive measures on a vanquished Germany. By such means, Germany was driven to despair, but France gained nothing...
>
> ... the creation of 'successor-states' that relied upon the 'right to self-determination,' provided no satisfactory solution, for in practice that right was accorded only to certain majority nations...
>
> The creation of thousands of kilometres of new borderlines in Central and Eastern Europe solved none of the region's economic problems. On the contrary..."[20]

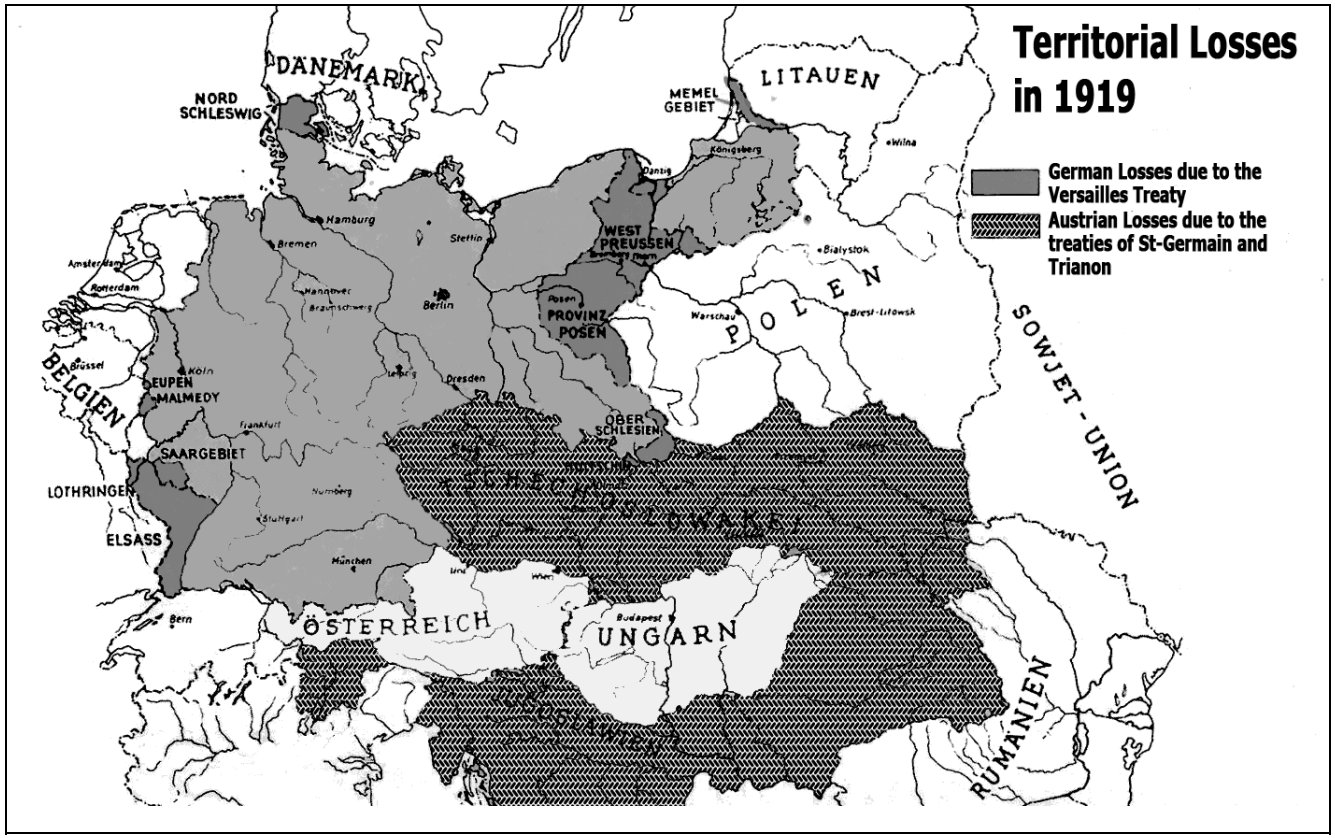
Let us repeat these thoughts with all urgency:

1. The States in Eastern Europe, newly created by Versailles, could scarcely manage their own problems.
2. The winners of Versailles were not magnanimous enough to attempt reconciliation with the defeated nations.
3. The League of Nations was unable to establish a constructive European policy.
4. Versailles created a new and precarious balance of power.
5. This doubtful balance of power was to be preserved according to the will of the League of Nations.

6. Germany was driven to despair by France's forcible measures.
7. The right to self-determination was reserved only for certain nations.

However, such an admission was too late and in any case had no effect. Those statesmen who had led the big battle against Imperial Germany in order to stamp out "the tyranny and the international anarchy" would not lift a finger to give a worthy democratic government in Germany an honest chance, once they had defeated Germany. Violence and international anarchy were thus the prospects for the future – at a time when nobody spoke of Hitler. And so Versailles became the birthplace of National Socialism.[21] An American historian who admits to "heartily disliking this Hitler"[22] wrote:

> "It is obvious that the revelations in the Nuremberg documents concerning Hitler's design for aggression are merely the last chapter in a long and a depressing book that began at Versailles." [22]
>
> "... for he [President F.D. Roosevelt] was well aware of the fact that none of the European nations that had profited by the Treaty of Versailles was willing to give up one crumb of the spoils of war. The injustices of that treaty could be rectified only through war." [22]


Territorial Losses in 1919
German Losses due to the Versailles Treaty
Austrian Losses due to the treaties of St-Germain and Trianon
DÄNEMARK
NORD SCHLESWIG
LITAUEN
MEMEL GEBIET
Königsberg
Danzig
Wilna
WEST PREUSSEN
Hamburg
Bremen
Stettin
Amsterdam
Rotterdam
Hannover
Braunschweig
Berlin
Posen
PROVINZ POSEN
Bialystok
Warschau
Brest-Litowsk
POLEN
SOWJET-UNION
Brüssel
BELGIEN
Köln
EUPEN
MALMEDY
Leipzig
Dresden
OBER SCHLESIEN
Frankfurt
SAARGEBIET
LOTHRINGEN
ELSASS
Nürnberg
Stuttgart
München
Bern
ÖSTERREICH
Budapest
UNGARN
RUMÄNIEN

Territorial Losses of Germany 1919
dictated by the Versailles Treaty

Viewpoints on Germany Since 1919

Fear in the Service of War Agitation

Up to now, the actions of the powers in east and west have been characterised by dialectics and the disregard or rather the biased distortion of universally binding principles. With the weapon of propaganda in the hands of the technological superpowers, they have managed to not only recast history to fit their mould of power political interests but also to set it in concrete. It is with phrases that "politicians" mobilise their peoples; it is with phrases that "historians" justify "scientifically" the actions of victorious governments; and it is with phrases that the nations will once more be driven to the barricades. Hatred and fear, lies and violence have always been the tools of those politicians who tirelessly repeat that they, in contrast to all others, desire peace, progress and the good of humanity and democracy. The politics of hatred and fear, impossible without lies and slander, are not only disgraceful by themselves but also carry inevitable consequences that, sooner or later, make war unavoidable.

That historically provable chain of cause and effect that was set off by the agitation of fear and hate seems to have taught us nothing. Evidently, everybody was satisfied that the victim of the agitation – Germany – had "justly" been charged twice, as indeed was "proven" not only by the outcome of the two world wars but also by the results of the Nuremberg trials of 1945 – 1946 (IMT).[23] The hate propaganda had by now reached such a degree of perfection that its very initiators no longer noticed their unrestrained conclusions. To continue this policy after the subjugation of Germany represents a danger to those living now and to future generations. Hence an analysis of this practice evident since Versailles 1919 ought to be demanded.

Ever since 1919 the victorious Allies and their associates have continued their war propaganda against Germany which, as we know, was not exactly concerned with a truthful reporting of events. While the imperial German government and Germany's military high command, the Prussian traditions and the German people had been the object of a rigorous campaign of slander designed to help win the First World War, that campaign was

diligently continued even after victory, so that the war aim – the crushing and weakening of Germany – would be maintained even in future times of peace. The systematic and deliberate practice of insulting, mocking and deriding other nations, governments and heads of state, with the help of modern means of communication and with reference to freedom of speech in peacetime, with accusations of lusting after revenge, emerged at a time when Germany was weak and defenceless and would have been willing to accept a policy of compliance. Highly indignant even today, those countries refuse to accept a share – even a modest one – of the responsibility for the worsening of the European situation after 1919. A few individual politicians realised the danger then, but they were unable to make themselves heard in the face of a forceful and antagonistic published opinion. Those who continually oppose the understanding of essential truths and the most elementary legal positions, resorting instead to an arrogant classification into civilised nations and barbarians, hence inciting fear and calling for rearmament, play with fire, because without respect amongst the nations there can be no peaceful coexistence. How could those arrogate to themselves the words of the "defence of Western Culture" who would deny respect for the ingrained tradition of the European sense of justice and truth? Have they the right to dictate moral principles or judgments to other peoples? Can they rightly invoke the National-Socialist "danger" that arose in 1933, when they have always been hostile to Germany, even before Hitler came to power? It was never a question of ideologies, declarations of certain beliefs and principles of leadership, nor was it ever a question of political parties, but solely of Germany's position in the world.

Already Kaiser Wilhelm II declared once:

> "How can I ever convince a people against their will, when day in and day out the press is prompting the people to an attitude of distrust and suspicion, and when every act of friendship and peace is misjudged?"[24]

Hatred of Germany was the rallying point of the Versailles victors and their co-victors: "The Boche will pay!" was the leading slogan of the time. It seemed that in electoral campaigns only those candidates who sought to outdo their opponents with displays of rabble-rousing "patriotism" were able to garner enough votes.

These politics of fear were not based on any facts that might have been open to different interpretations. It started out from arbitrary evaluations,

insinuated motives, intentions, schemes, procedures and suppositions, most of which were pure inventions. Already a Weimar government had withdrawn from the Geneva disarmament conference in September 1932, stating that it could no longer endure the constant discrimination against Germany, and that it considered the arguments presented by the French delegation in support of new security measures outrageous and dishonourable. Lloyd George, British War Premier from 1916 to 1922, stated in September 1932 when referring to the disarmament subject:

> "I see no difficulty in making the German understanding my own in realising that the victorious nations have brazenly breached the trust in the armament question."[25]

The same man, two years later on 29 November 1934, stated in the British House of Commons:

> "The victorious powers solemnly promised the Germans in the Treaty that they would disarm, if Germany led the way in disarming. Germany waited fourteen years for the fulfilment of this promise. During that time a queue of distinctive, peaceable Ministers were active in Germany, Ministers who did not stop to seriously entreat the Big Powers to redeem the given promise at long last. They [the victorious powers] – made fun – bantered these German Ministers into a number of agreements, among them one, a distinctive anti-war agreement. In the meantime, all countries, with the exception of England, had intensified their arming and had even granted government loans to Germany's neighbours with which they, in turn, established powerful military organisations close to Germany's borders. Is it any wonder that the German people were ultimately driven to riots and revolution against the chronic fraudulence of the big powers?"[26]

This man was not a "Fascist," he was not a German, but he once was Britain's Prime Minister. He knew only too well that France had not only continued to re-arm – considering herself not to be bound by the relevant clauses of the treaty – but that she had also, "from the very days the various peace treaties were signed, encouraged a mass of small states to arm themselves vigorously."[27]

> "Thus, the Allies imposed disarmament upon Germany first whilst accepting themselves the moral obligation to reduce their own armies afterwards. Was this obligation carried out or not? The only reply we can give to this question is 'no' – because it was actually after the First World War that France sought more than ever to become the first military Power in Europe, and encouraged her allies in Central Europe, especially the Poles and Czechoslovaks, to rearm."[28]

France "had imposed upon the Germans humiliations and sufferings such as the victorious Germans had never attempted to do."[29] France had, "in spite of her financial crisis and her declining population, the biggest army in the world."[30]

France must be considered responsible for the breakdown of the European disarmament process,[31] and once again was therefore to be

blamed for the undermining of trust in the victors' word. That Germany had fulfilled her disarmament obligations was acknowledged by the fact that the victorious powers withdrew their "Inter-Allied Military Commission" (31 January 1927), recalled their disarmament verification team (January 1930), and moved out of the Rhineland (June 1930).

Leaving aside the armaments question, there appeared in Britain, during the summer and autumn of 1932, a diversion, as it were, that would take people's mind off the Great Depression rampant in the land, but that was to have grave consequences: Winston Churchill and his growing gang of supporters began their first hateful anti-German propaganda campaign with constant and forceful references to the possibility of an imminent war and to the necessity of re-armament.[32] Churchill's propaganda phrases, unrestrained and contradictory though they may have been, later formed the basis for a new scheme of "international law." The fact that in 1932 it was the peaceable Weimar Republic that Churchill was presenting as a "danger" to the world and, consequently, himself as "always having to play the prophet of doom and gloom," has been conveniently forgotten today.[33]

The state of the political situation in foreign affairs in 1933 and again in 1936 was not of Hitler's making; rather it was the situation he found himself in. The policies of the victorious powers, outlined in the following points, were bound to have certain consequences in a community of sovereign nations, regardless of whether they considered the revision of the Versailles directives to be justified or not:

1. The hypothesis of Germany's exclusive war guilt was raised to the status of international principle.
2. The refusal to acknowledge equality of rights for Germany.
3. The violation of the Versailles Treaty's directives by the victors and their allies or rather the support or condoning of these infringements by the League of Nations powers (see pp. 30).
4. The failure to guarantee the rights of the ethnic Germans separated from the Reich, and their expulsion from their homeland.
5. The non-observance of the Allied disarmament guarantees.
6. The rejection of the attempts at reconciliation made by all the Weimar Governments (only in the last years preceding 1933 was some reconciliation achieved, and then only in regard to single issues).

7. The foreign trade economic boycott launched against Germany starting in March 1933 by leading powers, primarily the United States of America.[34]
8. The rejection of all German proposals for arms limitation. Hitler's recommendations up to 1935:
   – Offer for total disarmament: *rejected*.
   – Offer of limiting the respective armies to 200,000 men: *rejected*.
   – Offer of limiting the respective armies to 300,000 men, with international supervision and non-aggression pacts with all neighbouring states: *rejected*.
   – Offer of an Air Pact: *rejected*.
   – Offer of a generous European settlement: *rejected*.[35]

   Those showing outrage at Hitler's demeanour consequently should first demonstrate this outrage at the policies of the victorious powers, where – especially with regards to France – "the public and parliaments remained hostile toward the idea of an accord with Hitler."[36]

   The following events triggered significant interactions:
9. Immediately prior to promising disarmament negotiations, the British government published on 4 March 1935 a White Book on "Germany's illegal rearmament," in which the National Socialist concept of education was also portrayed as a danger to world peace[37] and it furthermore announced a – British – increase in arms production. Therefore, the British were justifying their increase in arms production by citing the German arms build-up, which was in reality even a full twelve months later "still in its embryonic stages" according to the French Ambassador in Berlin.[38] Yet once again a deliberate distortion of the truth was made by one of the "peace-loving democracies," which was a contributory factor along the road to war, that is to say, to an aggravation of the tension in Europe.
10. Extending the military service in France to two years, announced on 6 March 1935, effective as of 15 March 1935.
11. Agreement of the British-French-Belgian General Staff on 14 March 1935, following extended discussions.

    Germany's answer to the events 8-11 was to bring back conscription on 16 March 1935 and by repudiating the Versailles armament limitations, but not without having given insistent prior warning regarding the previously announced measures 8-11.

12. The French-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact, signed on 2 May 1935, ratified and in effect as of 27 February 1936. This pact was concluded in Paris in spite of the full knowledge of the objectives of Bolshevism and in spite of the knowledge that only one year earlier, on 27 January 1934, Lazar Kaganovich, head of the Politburo and brother-in-law of Stalin, had made public his point of view in the Soviet daily *Isvestia*:

    "A new French-German war would be very much in the interests of the Soviet Union."[39]

13. The Czech-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact, signed 16 May 1935.
14. In reaction to the French-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact that had become effective only a week previously, and wary of the growing strength of the Communists in France (the "People's Front" since November 1935), Hitler ordered on 7 March 1936 a symbolic 19 battalions into the demilitarised zone of the – German! – Rhineland. The objective was to enhance Germany's military security in the face of the danger of a Communist encirclement, but also to forcefully stress the will of the Reich to attain equality of rights. Hitler pointed out that by signing the French-Russian Treaty, France had unilaterally broken the Locarno Treaty of 1925 and was now pledged to commence hostilities against Germany without consulting the Council of the League of Nations, if either of the two signatory Powers should decide to accuse Germany of an act of unprovoked aggression. If one comes to realise that the Soviet Union had been typecasting the Third Reich as aggressor since 1933 already, and also the NSDAP from the first moment of success of their domestic policy in the Weimar Republic, then it is not difficult to imagine that it only requires the power of persuasion and a common interest, but most certainly not facts, to regard Germany as an "aggressor."

    At the time when the Rhineland was reoccupied by German armed forces, Hitler stated in his speech at the Reichstag that he was willing

    a. to agree once more to the establishment of a demilitarised zone, on condition of a mutual accord on the part of France and Belgium,
    b. to conclude a French-Belgian-Dutch-German Non-Aggression Pact for 25 years with a British-Italian guarantee,

c. to rejoin the League of Nations, since the refusal to grant parity of rights would meanwhile have been annulled.

Result: Refusal.

15. August 1936: Soviet army doubled in size.
16. Sustained rearmament on the part of Czecho-Slovakia, Poland and the USSR, as well France and Britain.

France's attachment to her idea of "national security" also had harmful effects. A sovereign nation and a major power in the heart of Europe can hardly be expected to orientate its policies in keeping with certain fixed ideas of its neighbours. (One may transfer such a scheme of things to the Communists' accusations which are peppered throughout with their slogans of militarism, revanchism, imperialism etc. until they have established their own form of Communist system of government.) Some years before Hitler came to power, the German Foreign Minister, Julius Curtius, had quite well described France's view on the European security problem, a view that was to remain unchanged:

> "The French security system cannot be the basis for a European agreement. The political uncertainty of European conditions is to be attributed, primarily, to the Versailles Treaty."[40]

France's security was effectively guaranteed before and after Hitler's coming to power by:

1. France herself, that is, the mother country with colonies of nearly 100 million human beings.
2. A defence budget which, from the beginning, was double that of Germany relative to the gross domestic product,[41] to say nothing of the fact that she had been alone in adopting a policy of re-armament in 1918.
3. The numerical superiority of military forces (in 1935, when Hitler could mobilise 36 divisions, France had 41 divisions). [41]
4. A lead in experiences in weapons technology.
5. At the time the largest and most modern fortifications on her eastern border – the Maginot Line.
6. The adjacent demilitarised zone of the Rhineland.
7. The very fact of being a victorious nation of WWI, *i.e.* having been a decision-maker in Europe after the First World War.
8. The Versailles Treaty and, on top of that, the guarantee and arbitration accords of the Treaty of Locarno (1925), which was

extremely generous and unilaterally interpreted, almost as if given full power of attorney.

9. The Covenant of the League of Nations.
10. The benevolent attitude of all leading League of Nations member states, as well as that of the United States of America and the British Dominions.
11. The military alliances with Great Britain,
12. with Belgium,
13. with Poland,
14. and with Czecho-Slovakia.

Moreover, the security of France was not in the least threatened, since at no time had Germany ever given the slightest cause that could have been taken as an unfriendly or at all threatening stance toward France.

What countermeasures were open to Germany in the face of encirclement and the highly armed states of readiness of her adjoining neighbours – France being only one of their numbers – by way of security guarantees? Germany did not have one single military ally after 1918 and – at least until 1936 – did not in any way come near to the armament and military potential of even one of her powerful neighbours. Germany seemed – in contrast to France – to have no claim whatsoever to even the minimum of self-protection. Furthermore, it would have been contrary to the British "law" of the European balance of power, if Britain had assumed an objective and just attitude that would have produced a pacifying influence on the European nations. A Germany after 1918, estranged from her neighbours by the unlawful looting of the Versailles victors and associates, was faced with the alternative, irrespective of whoever was to pick up the reins of government: to either renounce her justified claims to national independence and equal rights, or else to incur the anger of a power coalition which was most eager to rip Germany of her remaining power. Germany was deprived of those rights, and the particular conditions of her location in central Europe – having long and unsecured borders with as many nations as no other country in the world – were ignored. Inevitably, German politics of whatever persuasion had to take this into account.

The "German danger" was fabricated at a time when there were absolutely no grounds for this. Drawing attention to the "German danger," France concluded her mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union in 1936,

without considering that a French-Russian alliance had already proven to be a contributing step toward the First World War! Public opinion in France, according to a statement of the French Ambassador in Berlin, was against an accord with Germany. [36] This was confirmed when the German Foreign Minister, Konstantin von Neurath, informed the American Ambassador in Paris, William C. Bullitt, on 18 May 1936:

> "that 'the deepest desire of Hitler was to come to a real understanding with France,' but every attempt he or Hitler had made to draw closer to the French had 'resulted in either no reply from France or a rebuff.'"[42]

With Hitler's taking of office, the policy of fear was carried on. Everybody felt even less inclined to admit to their own mistakes and to consider a change in attitude, since we are dealing here with "the black sheep of international society" – Adolf Hitler. As there were also others who were insulting Germany and laying the blame for each and every woe in the world at Hitler's feet, so they too joined the movement of hatred and fear agitation in the hope to find favour with the rest of the world and enhance their own countries' repute and security. In reality, however, these agitators departed from their own professed ideas of equality of rights and sovereignty, of justice and of peace politics to such a degree that they only multiplied the possible causes for conflict. That which they had wanted to prevent, they have evoked – by means of fear and agitation. Yet, legitimate laws can never be derived from fear within the context of international co-existence – even less so from groundless fear.

Adolf Hitler stated in an interview with the *Daily Mail* in 1933:

> "We find the charge that the German people are enthusiastically preparing for war incomprehensible. This charge reveals a misunderstanding of the German revolutionary cause. With a few exceptions we – leaders of the National Socialist movement – are veterans. Show me the veteran who would prepare for war with enthusiasm!
>
> Our youth is our whole future; we cherish them. How could we bring them up only to have them shot to bits on the battlefield?"[43]

In a radio address on 12 November 1933, the eve of parliamentary elections in Germany, Reich President Paul von Hindenburg said:

> "Those abroad who insinuate war-like intentions on our part are lying and they are slandering us. Anyone who has experienced the horrors of war in three campaigns, as I have, cannot possibly want to see another war, but rather wish only for peace, and consider that keeping the peace is his first duty to the German people and to the world... With all our heart we wish to attain peace in honour and dignity."[44]

Adolf Hitler stated at Berlin Tempelhof airport on 1 May 1934:

"Even if others deny our people's love of peace, the true spirit of our people is reflected most strongly and convincingly in the comparison of territorial *Lebensraum* for the German nation and that of other nations….

Thus the German people did not want war, because they did not need it. They are capable of earning a decent living without foreign booty, tribute and contributions. And they have already proved it."[45]

Hitler once more emphasised this after the celebrations following the reintegration of the Saarland into Germany in March 1935:

"With today's techniques any war would amount to madness. Whoever talks of war should be barred from international politics. Even in a war on the smallest scale, utilisation of modern weaponry would cause such destruction and blood-letting on both sides that I think only a madman could want a war nowadays."[46]

Hitler elaborated more on this theme during the *Gauleiter* conference at the Munich city hall in 1936:

"All around the world today, a regular witch hunt is organised against me. Pick up any newspaper in the world and read it. The hatred expressed for me is terrifying. I understand the emigrants who have been fleeing our country like mice from a cat since my appointment as Chancellor. They scream that I have taken away their wealth. Let them! I'm not impressed, and nor are the German people. But, just as I had perceived in 1919 and 1920, Germany's enemies are organising throughout the world a menacing network of hatred and jealousy whilst pretending to attack only me. What have I done – what have the German people done to stir up such hatred amongst these rich men, the richest in the world? We want to rebuild our Reich with our own strength and in peace. Suddenly our products are being boycotted and we are forced to adopt a policy of self-sufficiency. Then they shout that this is against the principles of world trade! I can only ask myself: What do these eternal enemies of our work really want? They certainly don't want to help us. Did they perhaps help the morally irreproachable Weimar Republic? No! They could simply bypass the government's authority more easily then. The Jews of the entire world hate me. That is understandable, and I accept it. But using their power, the Jews are mounting forces the world over against our principles of life. Why does England hate me? Why the USA? Why France? I almost believe it is easier for me to come to terms with Moscow than with the unpleasant democracies, satiated with wealth as they are. But I have troubled, sleepless nights. The thought of the world powers united against us keeps me awake."[47]

Hermann Göring, at a gathering of Veterans in Berlin in February 1937, said the following:

"There can be no better defenders of peace than yesterday's front-line soldiers. I am convinced that they, more than anyone else, have the right to demand and to build peace. It is to those men, who for four hard years have gone, with their weapon in hand, through the hell of war, the hell of the World War, that it belongs to organise the life of the nation, and I know that the veterans will defend and maintain the blessings of peace for their people... Those who do not know the horrors of war may talk of joyous battles to come. But we know the dreadful cost of the final battle between the nations."[48]

Already during the Weimar era, Hitler had to institute proceedings for libellous action as the plaintiff time after time. He won every case.[49] Not even once during that period was Hitler taken to court for defamation! In the domestic or party political struggle for power this kind of agitation had

been cultivated in the name of freedom of speech. However, when there is no control to curb such excesses on the international level, when the stakes have now been raised from solely election success or defeat of political parties to the plateau of peace or war between countries, then such "intellectual bickering" assumes totally new dimensions. But it was considered legitimate and "patriotic" to continue these agitations on the international field with disregard to the rising threat to the European nations caused by this. The foreign press seemed to know no constraint when it came to stirring up hatred amongst nations and racial prejudice. Hitler's remarks from his Reichstag speech of 28 April 1939 went unheeded:

> "As far as Germany is concerned, I am not aware that threats of that kind are being made against other nations; but I do read every day in the democratic newspapers lies about these threats. I read every day of German mobilisation, of landings, of extortions and that against countries with whom we are living not only in perfect tranquillity, but with whom we have, in many cases, a deep friendship.
>
> ...then it is criminal negligence, not to use a stronger expression, when heads of nations, who have at their disposal the power, are incapable of tightening the reins on their warmongering press and so keep the world safe from the threatening disaster of a military conflict."

It ought to be the duty of journalism to promote understanding amongst nations at all cost. To slander other nations and their leaders, to denigrate and treat them unfairly is a transgression of that duty. Democracies are particularly vulnerable to the dangers posed by an anonymous journalism, for the politician's position is not secure and responsibilities are not clear-cut. The power forces of a society, with which a press dominated by Mammon is in perfect alignment, can promote politicians at any moment whom they find acceptable and ruin politicians who stand in the way of their financial interests, including those who are truly committed to peace (*e.g.* Neville Chamberlain).

The Reich government was charged with warlike intentions for the purpose of world domination. Was there any truth in this accusation? The National Socialist German Workers Party's (NSDAP) coming to power allegedly "meant war." This claim could be heard everywhere at a time when every other country in Europe was prepared or preparing for war, judging by their armament and defence potential, that is, all except Germany. That Hitler should have been planning war already in 1933 could not even be established at the IMT Proceedings in Nuremberg in 1945/46. A government, such as the National Socialist government, having experienced internal and external political difficulties since coming to power, is hardly

in a position from a technical point of view to plan for immediate or long-term campaigns of conquest. Was the astonishingly rapid surmounting of Germany's political, economic, cultural and social chaos a sign of war preparations? Does one build motorways in the middle of one's country and passenger ships because one is planning for war? Does one perfect weapon techniques in order to commit crimes? All these intentions were imputed to the German leadership, never to other governments. Yet, a government that neglects effective and prudent management of the people's economic welfare, their security and their future is unworthy and irresponsible – irrespective of how other powers might judge these measures!

Already in 1933 the rebounding of Germany's economy was shamelessly described as "industrial mobilisation":

> "Germany has always worked in a climate of a mobilisation regime. Workers were labouring nine to ten hours a day. Factories were being converted to war industry centres. Civilian consumption was reduced to an extremely low level. This resulted in conditions similar to those which existed at the time of the World War. Mr. Benes had stated as certain that by spring 1935, Germany would have an Air Force of 4,000 planes and that was just the beginning.
>
> What about the other powers?
>
> There was not the least sign of mobilisation amongst them. There was only the purest, most liberal peace-loving regime!"[50]

Words like these were not written by some dubious hacks, but by men claiming to be "serious historians" who fabricate these fantastic accounts. They have no qualms in interpreting the boosting of agricultural production as well as the ancestral system of farmstead inheritance (*Erbhofordnung*) as "plans for deflecting agriculture to a program of war preparation."[51] They have described the National Labour Service (*Reichsarbeitsdienst)* as an important factor in Germany's secret rearmament, the proverbial German discipline as an indication of craving revenge and lusting for war, and the German political restructuring toward centralisation and uniformity – a process which can be found in many nations – as "evidence" for "barbaric tyranny" and "bellicose imperialistic intentions." The political fermentation created by these assertions is the result of irresponsible agitation, just like the claim of a "terrible challenge to the free and civilised world because of German technology."[52] And, according to the Communists, the Second World War began in 1933 with Hitler's accession to power.[53]

How much did those agitators from yesterday and how much do the "historians" of today manage to cram into the trunk of the "Hitler fascist" rearmament, and that not only from Communist quarters! Apparently

rearmament means: the construction of barracks, airports, research laboratories, research institutes, administrative buildings, etc., installations with which all the other major powers were amply equipped in 1933 but which, apparently, a great power such as Germany ought not to possess; motorways, passenger ships and state-owned industrial plants (the Volkswagen Works and Hermann Göring Works, for example), not to mention the production of boots and trucks.[54] The development of civil aviation had been largely neglected during the Weimar period. Other countries – in particular England and France – had carefully attended to their own civil aviation year after year without prompting an angry word from the "world conscience"! Even after 1933, the yearly expenditure in that field by either of the two was far greater than what Hermann Göring proposed for Germany.[55]

Yet still more has to be crammed in: the procurement of uniforms for the army, for the National Labour Service, for SS, SA, OT, HJ; the establishment of such organisations as the German Labour Front with its work booklet for members (corresponding to the soldier's service booklet), the *Organisation Todt* etc., the economic planning in the four year program, the appeal to national community and comradeship, the physical and military training of the youth – in fact, Hitler's every action from 1933 onward is placed in the category "rearmament":

> "All measures taken [by Hitler], however, in order to stimulate the economy, to increase production, to raise export levels, to secure raw materials, to build new industries or to make agriculture self-sufficient, were calculated for the eventuality of war."[56]

Neither cultural activities nor social policy escaped censure. This too was pressed into the warmongers' service – not only by the opinion-forming press, but also by "historians" – as a "conspiracy against world peace," since it was designed "to befog the masses, to deceive them and to transform them into willing instruments for the planned warfare and world domination." – One has to marvel how far grown men will go to cater to the gullibility of the masses in order to fan the flames of hatred and use it for their own interests.

A great power that has spent six or rather seven years rearming intensively (in preparation for a criminal war of world conquest, of course), to the exclusion of all else, ought to have built up an enormous military capability. How pathetically small, however, were armament, ammunition

stocks and equipment provisions in reality (see pp. 245ff.)! It was not superiority in a tangible, material sense, but rather an exemplary military spirit, a bold strategy, a lead in technology and by concentrating an effective and well-aimed weaponry at the centre of the battle that made possible the victorious campaigns of the Wehrmacht in 1939-1940!

With more justification than any other government could Hitler claim national and historical necessity for getting Germany back on her military feet:

> "Even a pacifist nation cannot allow its defensive capacity to drop below a certain level. When a state is no longer able to defend itself against an attack by its weakest neighbour, that low point is reached. This low point was for the German Reich, with her one hundred thousand men army without tanks and without heavy artillery and without reserves of trained yearly intakes and without an Air Force, so drastically undercut in the Versailles Treaty that compared to this even little Czechoslovakia would appear armed to the teeth, let alone Poland, Belgium or France. A military alliance of these nations could bring Germany down with one blow. To say nothing of the colossus that is the Red Army. Any illegal weapons stocks of the Weimar Republic period were really of no consequence.
>
> Therefore, when in 1935 Hitler announced his program, providing for the creation of 36 divisions, he could have had no other objective than to transform the totally abnormal and completely defenceless condition of the Reich into a position that would at least ensure some capability for defence."[57]

Hitler was not increasing the arms build-up in order to push the country into the chaos of war at a time when it was working toward economic recovery and re-establishing national unity. In those circumstances no political leader would set himself such a mad and unachievable goal as a war of conquest! Did Hitler not begin rearming only after the Versailles powers surrounding Germany had broken their pledge to pursue multilateral disarmament and ensure equality for Germany, had rejected the repeated proposals for disarmament of the German governments, yes, even intensified their own rearming and, furthermore, committed themselves to alliances, formation of military blocs and verbal assurances, all directed against Germany? Every single administration of the Weimar era faced the acute danger of invasion by Germany's neighbours. In fact, invasions actually took place under the designation of "preventive measures," and border skirmishes took place almost every day. Only reluctantly did France renounce her claim to the left bank of the Rhine. Other countries were claiming German land far in excess of the boundaries drawn at Versailles: Czecho-Slovakia demanded the mountainous region of Glatz and the Lausitz, and Poland sought to annex all of Upper Silesia and East Prussia.

With Hitler's accession to power this situation did not fundamentally change in Germany's favour. Those factors mentioned were and they remained the starting point for Hitler's course of action. Also, there is no sign of "German militarism" as forerunner and preparation for German plans of aggression. Even if a world press has distorted the facts for seventy years or more with unchanging monotony and has accused Hitler of initiating rearmament, this may have served the egotistical interests of certain powers, but has not served the cause of historical truth. The British historian A.J.P. Taylor, along with many other experts, has clearly established that "the French had fired the starting pistol for the arms race"[58] and not the Germans.

Not once did Hitler recklessly exploit an aggravated situation, as caused by any victorious power, in order to excuse an excessive rearming. At every stage of development he patiently made offers and proposals of all possible variations on a basis of equality. The words of his Reichstag speech of 21 May 1935 should go down in history in full appreciation of their merit:

> "It [the Reich government] is willing at any time to keep within the confines of arms limitation to the same extent that this is undertaken by the other nations as well. Of its own accord, the German Reich government has already announced certain proposed limitations. With this it has most clearly signalled the good intentions of avoiding a never ending arms race."

A weak nation is in no position to demand anything in this world and, as the Versailles policy on Germany proved, not even the right to self-determination. Therefore, it would not have been in the German line of reasoning, after the bitter years of impotent helplessness, to refuse any longer an economic and military and, thus, a political revival. Only with resolution and courage could Germany regain her honour and her full sovereignty:

> "However, all the measures necessary [for recovering the national honour] could not be secured by merely negotiating. But apart from that: The honour of a nation cannot ever be negotiated, but it can only ever be taken. In this way, honour was not at one time bargained away, rather it was once taken away."[59]

The German-Polish non-aggression and friendship treaty of 1934 is seen by these "peace politicians" as a "decisive step in the preparation for German aggression."[60]

> "Hitler needed that pact to confuse the advocates of collective security and to show as an example that Europe's real need was not for collective security but for bilateral agreements. This allowed the German aggressors to decide freely when and with whom to make agreements, and to choose the timing of their attacks…

More and more audacious, Hitler took a number of actions in order to...” [60]

Words fail in the light of so much magnanimous recognition of other nation’s rights and of the generous respect of the German resolve for regeneration and international co-operation. Malicious agitation for war? No, such argumentations and evaluations are an exemplary indication of true peace politics – at least that’s what they were called when practiced on the German people after 1945.

Because Hitler was trying to establish friendly relations with the neighbouring countries in the east and indeed was able to shape them constructively, he was in turn accused of aggression or rather of preparation for it! A look at the present time reveals that nowadays the agitation lacks the refinement of previous decades which is all the more astonishing considering that now it is directed against other nations and “regimes.”

In unequivocal terms many writers of memoirs after the Second World War have written about the situation at that time in Britain, France, the Soviet Union and in other countries. One of them was the Soviet Ambassador in London, I.M. Maisky:

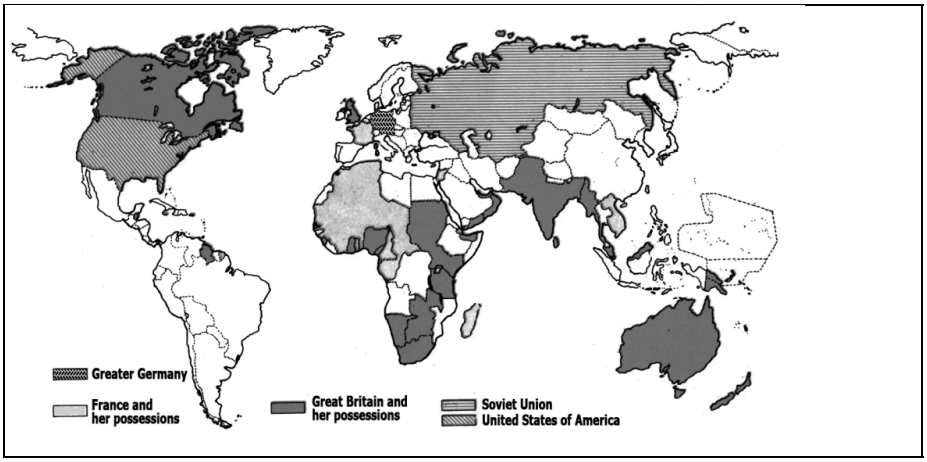
> “Even such an experienced statesman as Vansittart, who then held the key post of Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, said to me in the course of a conversation in the summer of 1933:
>
> ‘Hitler has many difficulties and enemies, external and internal, to contend with. ...
>
> The French, the Belgians, the Czechs and the Poles are extremely suspicious of him. ...
>
> There are men who aspire to the first place in its ranks, and it will not be easy for Hitler to cope with them. ...
>
> You cannot exclude the possibility that the internal struggle will break up the National Socialist Party… We must wait and see.’”[61]

Since Hitler had to expect meeting hostility from the western powers, from the eastern European nations, from international Jewry – in so far as it was in existence and was influential[62] – but also from Bolshevism, these considerations alone would have made any of the imputed long-term planning of conquest impossible for the Reich government. Besides, the First World War had provided sufficient teaching material to describe and illustrate the strategic predicament of the German nation. In addition, it was reasonable to suspect that there were already in place secret treaties of the Soviet Union with Czecho-Slovakia and France, and then France with Great Britain, so that at short notice an overwhelmingly massive front could be deployed against Germany. Confronted with such impossible odds, any Reich government of whatever constitution would have to summon all their

resources to manage at all to prevail even for a few weeks or months. In any case, all German plans had to take account of these circumstances, which they did, as the discovered documents prove.

It was slanderous to say that Hitler was going to attack England or France, or to assert that the honour of those two nations had been offended by the Munich agreement (of September 1938). It is rather ridiculous and dangerous to draw such conclusions from an accord reached freely by four sovereign statesmen, who then afterwards strengthened it with additional declarations of peace and friendship! It was equally irresponsible to insinuate and spread throughout the world the monotonous propaganda charges that Hitler, in pursuit of his alleged programs, wanted to exterminate the Czechs, the Poles, the Danes, the Norwegians, the Rumanians, the Hungarians, thirty million Slaves, or the Jews, and that he wanted to conquer the Ukraine or even the whole world![63]

He neither had a program for conquest, nor did he have a program for extermination or anything similar![64] Hitler's willingness for friendship with a strong Poland is historically provable right up to the last days of peace. The agitation of fear as practiced by U.S. President F.D. Roosevelt with his declaration that America's frontier was to be on the Rhine,[65] because the Third Reich was allegedly threatening the USA and was planning an attack on the South American nations, can only be described as unbridled warmongering. Normally, these kinds of lunatic fantasies would be relegated to the land of fairy tales and insane asylums, had it not been for leading "democrats" who utilised these slogans for their own policies of inciting war amongst the nations. Furthermore, it cannot be argued that the anti-Semitism raging in Germany was a justification for the war policies directed against Germany, or that it should have been the trigger for it, because:



Map 3: *Taking a global view of the territorial possessions of the Allied Great Powers in 1939 in comparison to Greater Germany. Their domination of the oceans with the strategic significance of the most important lifelines of World Trade is not adequately shown; this would need to be added. Then consider that these nations, which had conquered a large part of the world during their recent history, accused Germany of having a plan to conquer the world...*

a. No sovereign state has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another.
b. Although there existed no anti-Semitism in Japan, it did not stop quite similar war policies against this nation, nor did it prevent the dropping of the two atomic bombs on a Japan that had already shown willingness for capitulation even before that event.
c. The anti-Semitism in other countries (*e.g.* in Poland or in the USSR) was never used as a reason for declaring war.
d. It was in particular the leading western powers (Britain, France and the United States) which were applying severe restrictions on the immigration of foreigners and Jews, and which also put into effect sustained resistance against these immigrants who were forcing their way into the upper echelons of their society. It is not very convincing when especially these powers then direct their moral indignation against a nation that had been lying prostrate after a lost World War and was, therefore, forced to accept an unwanted influx of 70,000 Jews from eastern Europe[66] and had to watch powerlessly how they gradually took over many top positions in German society; and when this nation, after its recovery, then put up an opposition. It

is even less credible when considering that these nations themselves also refused to admit Jewish emigrants from Germany.[67]

To continue the serialisation of the Versailles war guilt defamation, Germany had to remain labelled a so-called "criminal nation." What was still named at Versailles "the instigation of the war for the conquest of Europe," became two decades later the "conquest of the world" – without any scruples and without logical foundations. The irony of world history is that just those particular powers who were the most vociferous at blaming Germany for planning world conquest – the USA, Great Britain and the Soviet Union – were the ones that were championing this aim for themselves, or at least were working their way up to becoming the "world police."

The proof for the Soviet Union: the Communist world-revolutionary teachings were rampant right up to the end of the Cold War – including the years 1939-1941 – and they were the basis for the Soviet foreign policy, which was followed consistently.

For Great Britain: First of all, it is self-evident that Britain had already conquered a fifth of the planet by the time Hitler came to power. To top this off, Winston Churchill wrote the following to F.D. Roosevelt a few months before his appointment as Prime Minister in 1939:

"Were I to become Prime Minister of Britain, we could control the world."[68]

For the United States: F.D. Roosevelt stated in a speech on 21 October 1944:

"We must play a leading role in the community of Nations."[69]

This attitude of Roosevelt could already be noted well before the outbreak of war in 1939. (See the chapter on U.S. foreign policy.)

The German people or their government were no more belligerent than other people or governments, and their methods of dealing with internal and foreign politics were the same or similar to other nations and governments. When judging, one must pass sentence equally on all. It would not be right to gloss over the reprehensible ways of one party, while denouncing the methods of the other party. On the way to reaching a verdict, one cannot avoid the question: Which important European nation, before the outbreak of war in 1939, had relinquished some of her own provinces and sections of her population just to keep peace intact? It has to be acknowledged that

Germany did exactly this, as it had waived all rights to its former provinces: Posen-West Prussia, East Upper Silesia, Southern Tyrol, Alsace-Lorraine, Eupen-Malmedy, Northern Schleswig and all German colonies.

The causes of war need to be traced right back to the governments and the press who, having lost all objectivity, were agitating and fanning fear, dread and instability into the flames of hatred, and thus inducing military defence measures and safety precautions. These are then followed by psychological and political chain reactions, ultimately ending in a war. The Versailles victors and their allies, but also the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), cannot be acquitted from the charge of having prepared the fertile ground for such chain reactions to flourish. They had resorted to using these dangerous weapons before Hitler, during his reign, but also after 1945, so that every nation is compelled to remain in a constant state of alert. Not even in the face of a Third World War threatening during the Cold War did they seem to have understood and recognised the root causes of war.

However, the nations of the world can no longer afford to have a mean and shabby propaganda that would shape the intellectual basis of their relations, of international law and of the international moral code. They demand – have the right to demand! – total objectivity and justice! But not only for the present and the future, but also for the past, because it is there that the foundation stone for political action is laid!

Winston Churchill and the “Blood Lust” Party

Since the First World War, Winston Churchill represented public opinion to an increasing degree in Great Britain. Then an empire, Great Britain moreover maintained close political and economic ties with the world powers of the Versailles alliance. Churchill, who already by 1934 could look back on a brilliant career and an impressive line of ministerial posts, attained to the most powerful position in the British government hierarchy as the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1924-1929).[70] He could count on the support of many like-minded in the British government and the British political parties, as well as that of President Roosevelt’s powerful inner circle.

All throughout the 1930s right up to the beginning of war,

> "He [Churchill] continued to write exhortations and expostulations in fortnightly articles to Lord Beaverbrook's Evening Standard which were syndicated to the provincial papers, to Europe and America. Churchill was probably one of the most widely read and best-paid columnists in the world."[71]

His arguments, which even the Tories, his own party colleagues, found "irresponsible," [71] are typical of the sense of value judgment (or lack of it) exercised by the journalists and politicians in his camp. They were also typical of the partners-in-arms against Germany in the Second World War. Typical was the war and atrocity propaganda practiced under his tutelage and typical also for the court historians after this war. Black became white and white was black. The operative point was that there was agitation without stopping, and that the kettle of hate was kept boiling to advance one's own selfish interests. Indeed, Winston Churchill was a master at this trade:

> "Without Hitler and the background of the events that spurred him to act, Churchill might never have held office again."[72]

The countless preposterous statements, which are unequalled in history in their coarseness and moral disqualification, were used by Churchill, when he, "driven by political ambition," was trying "to rouse Britain against the Nazis."[73] They devalue all the other fluctuating, extreme and often contradictory ideas of this man. Who can take seriously Churchill's words spoken in the House of Commons in November 1933?

> "We see that a philosophy of blood lust is being inculcated into their youth to which no parallel can be found since the days of barbarism."[74]

The yardstick for his evaluation was not truth, nor was there an intention for truth, but there was his "law," the "law of the British Foreign Policy."[75] The most wicked kind of defamation, daily malicious slandering in the press, all conceivable warmongering measures were permitted under this "law," which recognised only one "authority" – Great Britain's interests of might. It goes without saying that Germany, especially after the unjust peace settlement of Versailles, had to counter such displays of "public opinion" in Great Britain and other countries with an attitude of self-confidence. Churchill – in a logical continuation of his previous policy against the German people – "compensated" Stalin in the Second World War by giving him German land with these words:

> "I regard this war [1939-1945] against German aggression on the whole as a Thirty-year-war from 1914 onward."[76]

For him there existed no difference between Imperial Germany, the Weimar Republic and National Socialism. Equally, it was a matter of indifference to him whether it concerned the Germans, the Poles, the French, the Spaniards, or others nationalities. Of prime importance for him was the interest of power. He was foolish enough to elaborate this clearly in his memoirs and hand it down to posterity. All remarks and actions of this man – one of the "Big Three" in 1945 – about Germany and National Socialism must be seen in the light of this fundamental position and must also be considered in the light of the essential features of British foreign policy.

Churchill was still describing the Versailles dictate as "just" in 1934 and was claiming that the sole guilt of Germany for the First World War was definitely established – contrary to all the divergent findings of historical research.[77] A few months after the conclusion of that "treaty" he had declared:

> "It is not Germany's power, but her weakness which we must fear."[78]

Be it Germany's strength or Germany's weakness – Winston Churchill continued his polemics undaunted, always fanning the flames of fear. However, the fact that he had deliberately caused Germany's weakness at that time (to quote concrete figures: 800,000 people were left to perish because of the British hunger-blockade, which had been extended to the Baltic Sea and which was continued after the armistice), he chose not to mention.[79] On the contrary, on 3 March 1919 in the House of Commons, he praised this hunger-blockade as shrewdness:

> "We are holding all our means of coercion in full operation, or in immediate readiness for use. We are enforcing the blockade with vigour… Germany is very near starvation.... Now is therefore the moment to settle."[80]

To remove the monarchy, "militarism" and the "police state" in Germany did not satisfy him. The Weimar political parties likewise had to be humiliated and driven to the edge. Why should he care, if in the process his ideas lost all credibility! Winston Churchill understood, furthermore, how to demonstrate his "British patriotic ethos" by agitating with fear and hate against Germany – a procedure which was and which is immensely "conducive" to spreading peace amongst nations. Insofar as he had made it

his guiding principle to insist on a "German danger" and on the existence of a de facto "state of war" ("I look at this Second World War as a Thirty-year-war against German aggression having started in 1914"), and insofar as he was alternating between extreme admiration and extreme contempt for National Socialism and Fascism, he believed that it fell to Britain, amongst the sovereign European nations, to act as the Versailles police headquarters and moral guide for humanity. Even within the ranks of his own party was he seen early on as "war politician":

> "To the world at large, Churchill appeared to be the very embodiment of a policy of war."[81]

Already during the First World War, Winston Churchill not only understood but also knew how to put into practice those methods that would stir up nations against each other, provoking them into war. This is what he said then, speaking as a "Liberal":

> "…to raise a panic without reason, a policy of trying to raise ill-will between two nations without cause."[82]

Nevertheless, Winston Churchill did deliberately pursue this policy of creating "bad blood between two nations without a motive" for most of his life – at least until 1945!

Those getting excited in Great Britain and putting Mussolini on a pedestal included Winston Churchill at a time when Hitler was still distancing himself from Fascism.[83] This man Winston Churchill, through his constant agitating, acquired a prestige, despite his often contradictory and unprincipled position, which he still enjoys today throughout the Anglo-Saxon world. This is proof of how little these nations have understood what had taken place in Europe in the first half of the 20th century.

Winston Churchill, the British "conservative politician," who had declared with pride that he had spent three-quarters of his life either engaging in battle or preparing for battle against Germany,[84] and who would habitually refer to the Second World War as a "Thirty-year-war against German aggression, beginning in 1914," but who would also occasionally speak of it as an "unnecessary war," said in 1935:

> "In fifteen years that have followed this resolve (of the housepainter, who had set out to regain all) he has succeeded in restoring Germany to the most powerful position in Europe, and not only has he restored the position of his country, but he has even, to a very great extent, reversed the results of the Great War… the vanquished are in the process of becoming the victors and the victors the vanquished… whatever else may be thought about these exploits they are certainly among the most remarkable in the whole history of the world."[85]

Winston Churchill, in November 1935:

"While all these formidable transformations were occurring in Europe, Corporal Hitler was fighting his long, wearing battle for the German heart.

The story of that struggle cannot be read without admiration for the courage, the perseverance and the vital force which enabled him to challenge, defy, conciliate, or overcome all the authorities or resistances which barred his path. He, and the ever increasing legions who worked with him, certainly showed at this time, in their patriotic ardour and love of country, that there was nothing they would not do or dare, no sacrifice of life, limb and liberty that they would not make themselves or inflict upon their opponents."[86]

In Churchill's opinion, the Allies, Britain and France, were responsible for Hitler's success:

"…and the achievement by which the tables have been turned upon the complacent, feckless and purblind victors deserves to be reckoned a prodigy in the history of the world and a prodigy which is inseparable from the personal exertions of life thrust of a single man.

…Those who have met Hitler face to face in public, business, or on social terms, have found a highly competent, cool, well-informed functionary with an agreeable manner, a discerning smile, and few have been unaffected by a subtle personal magnetism.

Nor is this impression merely the dazzle of power. He exerted it on his companions at every stage in his struggle, even when his fortunes were in the lowest depths...

One may dislike Hitler's system and yet admire his patriotic achievement. If our country were defeated I hope we should find a champion as admirable to restore our courage and lead us back to our place among the nations."[87]

Winston Churchill on 4 October 1938:

"…There must not be lacking in our leadership something of that spirit of the Austrian corporal who, when all had fallen into ruins about him, and when Germany seemed to have fallen forever into chaos, did not hesitate to march forth against the vast array of victorious nations and has already turned the tables so decisively upon them."[88]

It was this same man who, having

"bestowed on the German leader the highest praise for his achievements, unlike any other foreign statesman has ever received from an Englishman,"[89]

nevertheless painted at the same time a radically different picture of Hitler – against his better knowledge – a portrait with poisonous colours. In a private conversation with the Polish Ambassador to London, Raczynski, on the eve of the Munich conference, he declared

"that the only hope lay in resolution and, if necessary, in war; and threatened that if Chamberlain once again decided on an inglorious retreat he, Churchill, would 'show him.'"[90]

His commentary on that conference in the House of Commons of 5 October 1938 ran thus:

"We have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat… We are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude which has befallen Great Britain and France.

The system of alliances in Central Europe upon which France has relied for her safety has been swept away, and I can see no means by which it can be reconstituted. The road down the Danube Valley to the Black Sea, the resources of corn and oil, the road which leads as far as Turkey, has

been opened, but there can never be friendship between the British democracy and the Nazi Power, that Power which spurns Christian ethics, which cheers its onward course by a barbarous paganism, which vaunts the spirit of aggression and conquest, which derives strength and perverted pleasure from persecution, and uses, as we have seen, with pitiless brutality the threat of murderous force."[91]

Such were his comments in the face of a conference at which, for the first time since 1919, the right to self-determination for Germans, for 3.5 million Sudeten Germans, was accomplished and accepted through peaceful negotiations! Even when leaving aside the Munich conference, we do here find, in a written communication from British Foreign Minister, Lord Halifax, to President Roosevelt, dated 25 January 1939, a confirmation of the kind of "dignity" and "wisdom" and "security" and of the sort of "European *esprit de corps*" that was being called into service across the Channel to work toward "peace":

"The British Foreign Office learned that Hitler was 'bitterly resentful at the Munich Agreement which baulked him of a localized war against Czechoslovakia and demonstrated the will to peace of the German masses in opposition to the war-mongering of the Nazi party. He feels personally humiliated by this demonstration. He regards Great Britain as primarily responsible for this humiliation, and his rage is therefore directed principally against this country which he holds to be the chief obstacle now to the fulfilment of his further ambitions.'

In the event of Germany picking a quarrel with Holland…"[92]

On 7 September 1938, in *The Times*, Winston Churchill endorsed the surrender of the Sudetenland as "the best way out of the situation,"[93] yet he declared on 16 October 1938 (eighteen days after the Munich conference, which had realised his recommendation), in a radio broadcast to the American nation:

"She [the Czechoslovak republic] was a democratic model in Central Europe, a land in which minorities were better treated than anywhere else. She has been forsaken, ruined, destroyed and swallowed up. Now, she is being digested..."

In the same tenor, claiming that the dictator had to let his party-pack-of-hounds taste blood at ever shorter intervals, and to give them hunting opportunities lest they turn on him and tear him to pieces, he continued:

"Is this a call to war? Does anyone pretend that preparation for resistance to aggression is unleashing war? I declare it to be the sole guarantee of peace. We need the swift gathering of forces to confront not only military but moral aggression."[94]

These are poisonous words indeed, which would surely have the most adverse effect on any kind of international relations! A good number of our present day "historians" must regret not being able to furnish credible proof for attributing such words to Hitler.

Others will have equally regretted the fact that copious remarks from eminent personalities from abroad about Hitler and National Socialism are available which are not only positive, but which even reveal an admiration not usually manifest: Lloyd George, who in 1918-1919 had "achieved what we wanted," which meant to him that "one of our main trading competitors has been beaten to a pulp,"[95] declared in 1936, after having visited Hitler, when his daughter greeted him jokingly with "Heil Hitler":

> "Yes, 'Heil Hitler!' I say it too, for he is truly a great man.[96]
>
> I have never met a happier people than the Germans, and Hitler is one of the greatest men among the distinctly great men that I have encountered."[97]

After his return from Germany, he published a detailed article in the *Daily Express* on 17 September 1936 entitled "I Talked to Hitler":

> "He rightly claimed at Nuremberg that in four years his movement has made a new Germany. It is not the Germany of the first decade that followed the war – broken, dejected, and bowed down with a sense of apprehension and impotence. It is now full of hope and confidence and of a renewed sense of determination to lead its own life without interference from any influence outside its own frontiers.
>
> There is for the first time since the war a general sense of security. The people are more cheerful. There is a greater sense of general gaiety of spirit throughout the land. It is a happier Germany. I saw it everywhere, and Englishmen I met during my trip and who knew Germany well were very impressed with the change.
>
> One man has accomplished this miracle… This is the new mood amongst the German youth. With almost religious fervour they believe in the movement and in their Führer. This impressed me more than anything I witnessed during my short visit to the new Germany. There was a revivalist atmosphere. It had an extraordinary effect in unifying the nation. Catholic and Protestant, Prussian and Bavarian, employer and workman, rich or poor, have been consolidated into one people. Religious, provincial and class origins no longer divide the nation. There is a passion for unity born of dire necessity."[98]

At the Teheran conference in November 1943, thus at the height of the German-Soviet war, Stalin

> "emphasized that only a very able man could accomplish what Hitler had done in solidifying the German people..."[99]

Theodor Heuss stated in 1932:

> "Nobody can withhold recognition of the indefatigability of this man [Hitler] who, after release from the fortress, began to fashion – and he understood how – with care, tenacity and with deliberation from the shattered remains a vessel anew."[100]
>
> "Of course, Hitler's achievements are not given their full due, if he was only recognised as the great and tireless organiser.
>
> He also stirred souls, and by his appearance inspired an enthusiasm that was willing to sacrifice and dedicate."[101]

Viscount Rothermere, (until 1939 head of the press office of the British Ministry for Information, member of the British parliament, after 1945 on

the board of directors of the Reuter agency, and one of the most powerful newspaper men in the world), had nothing to gain by sharing his positive comments on Hitler; on the contrary, it could only be to his detriment. Nevertheless, after having emphasised Hitler's desire for peace, he found the following words:

> "Great numbers of people in England regard Herr Hitler as an ogre, but I would like to tell them how I have found him. He exudes good-fellowship. He is simple, unaffected and obviously sincere. It is untrue that he habitually addresses private individuals as if they were public meetings.
>
> He is supremely intelligent. There are only two others I have known to whom I could apply this remark – Lord Northcliffe and Mr. Lloyd George. If you ask Herr Hitler a question, he makes an instant reply full of information and eminent good sense. There is no man living whose promise given in regard to something of real moment I would sooner take.
>
> He believes that Germany has a divine mission and that the German people are destined to save Europe from the designs of revolutionary Communism. He has a great sense of the sanctity of the family, to which Communism is antagonistic, and in Germany has stopped the publication of all indecent books, the production of suggestive plays and films, and has thoroughly cleaned up the moral life of the nation…
>
> I was talking with Hitler some eighteen months ago when he said, 'Certain English circles in Europe speak of me as an adventurer. My reply is that adventurers made the British Empire.'…
>
> His courtesy is beyond words, and men and women alike are captivated by his ready and disarming smile.
>
> He is a man of rare culture. His knowledge of music, painting and architecture is profound.
>
> Many people seemed to find difficulty in reconciling the conception of a man of culture with a man of resolute action. …
>
> It is probable that if a poll were taken to decide who in common estimation is the greatest political Englishman in our history, the name of Cromwell would lead all others. But Cromwell was a man of the greatest determination and the most ruthless methods."[102]

In the widely circulated British newspaper *The Daily Mail* was stated on 20 May 1938:

> "Herr Hitler's policy is achievement without bloodshed. He reached supremacy in Germany, a country of 68,000,000 people, with little loss of life. Austria was brought into the German Empire without a single shot being fired.
>
> In the troubles in Palestine during the past five years more people have lost their lives than in Germany and Austria from the establishment of the Hitler régime to the present time." [102]

A party with a "philosophy of blood-lust" reminiscent of the times of barbarism could never conquer the heart of a nation of 80 million people whom a period of real hardship had necessarily left cautious and highly alert. Such a party could never win any battle, whether fighting with intellectual or material tools, against a modern and powerful state machinery, nor against the numerous and disciplined organisations of the work force, of the bourgeoisie, of industry and commerce, nor against the press; it could not expect to get the better of the experienced leadership of the party or of experts in various fields, nor overcome the predominant

ideology and the manifold foreign influences. Such a party could never gain victory despite ten years of oppression, slandering, economic discrimination and financial plight – alone, without allies, without friends or without benefactors.

> "It would be missing the point totally, while sending one's imagination in that direction (the financing of the party by industry), to want to disregard the fact that the great potency of the NSDAP is based on the self-financing through its membership and in its ability to finance public meetings with a contribution from those attending. This (self-financing) is not simply a great organisational feat, but at its root is found the idealism of the thousand-fold willingness to make sacrifices."[103]

Whoever embraced the NSDAP before 1933 had to expect to make unbelievable sacrifices and not only of a material nature. A member often put his job in danger, dedicated his free time, and even spent his nest egg – more than likely from his unemployment benefit. He volunteered his health and even the life and destiny of his family for the benefit of the movement. He accepted these hardships because his faith in a united and worthy Germany, in a public-spirited Germany without class struggle and without promiscuity, was stronger than all the persecutions that he had to endure.

> "The ethos of the National Socialist movement, and this is perhaps its greatest psychological achievement, lies embedded in that the separation of class and of status and the professional and educational differences could be surmounted by its great momentum, stronger than most of the other parties."[104]

Now, certain individuals in other countries or indeed their managers of the published opinion cannot fathom how hundreds of thousands – even millions – of Germans could shoulder labouring and effort without pay and who, fired with idealism, took it upon themselves to pay for their uniforms, for travel expenses, for additional costs over and above their party dues, at a time of a threatening economic crisis and unemployment – year after year! – while at the same time risking their livelihood and their lives, yet nonetheless, that's the way it was. No party, whether in Germany or anywhere else in the world, has ever known or has even come close to ever having known such selfless spirit of sacrifice among its large following – not at a time of political persecution and not at a time of political power. This all for a "philosophy of blood-lust"? As German political scientist Hans Grimm put it 1932:

> "Admiringly I perceive that he [Hitler] is almost the first one in the world who has moved multitudes without any coercion and also without any tangible benefits to follow of their own free will."[105]

Hitler's rise to power was achieved without bloodshed and in a disciplined manner without equal in the history of revolutionary movements. Furthermore, at the earliest possible date – 5 March 1933 – the people were given the opportunity to vote in the Reichstag elections, the Landtag (state parliament) and the local elections to express freely their stance regarding the recent events.

The words of the highly respected democrat Friedrich Naumann (1860-1919) would deserve to be considered in any objective evaluation:

> "It is useless to try to judge revolutionary thinking according to moral criteria, for the political systems in which we live today have not arisen from the precepts of the Penny catechism. All our present is founded on yesterday's acts of violence. There is not one political power that has not spilled blood while coming into existence."[106]

Some thirty years later, a U.S. President reached conclusions similar to those that the man from Berlin had realised already after the First World War. U.S. President John F. Kennedy said on 24 April 1961:

> "The complacent, the self-indulgent, the soft societies are about to be swept away on the driftwood of history. Only somebody strong, industrious, determined, courageous and far-seeing, somebody who recognises the nature of our conflict, is the one who can possibly survive anyhow."[107]

In 1935 the former German Ambassador to London, later the Reich's Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, wrote to Lord Allen of Hurtwood:

> "I think I am not anticipating wrongly when I state that an historical account of the National Socialist struggle for power – analysed at a future date in an objective manner – will acknowledge this as, frankly, the classic example of a revolution that, after all, only a nation of the highest cultural level could carry out."[108]

But really, the world did not appreciate that German misery was being cured and that there was an end to German discord – the world did not want to respect the new self-confident German posture. It was precisely that which one did *not* want. One condemned the way the Germans intended to overcome their misery and the way they contemplated dwelling in their historical sphere. The world only perceived the threat to their unlawful order in Europe, and that was sufficient reason to set in motion the full force of political polemics while their worldwide propaganda machine was given the "full steam ahead," without any consideration of their responsibility to their own people. "A philosophy of blood-lust remindful of the times of the barbarians" – that was the observation of this world. The hate campaigns were so intense that even in deepest peacetime a German, in the eyes of others, was not to be regarded as an equal person with equal

rights, must not even be classed as a true human being, but as a barbarian who could show forth nothing but hideousness and who was striving for world domination. Is it likely that a people, uniting themselves in the face of bitter privation and who are not writing the history of their revolution for amusement or simply to pass the time, should really have nothing better to occupy themselves with than this? Is it not impudent warmongering to shriek such anti-German opinions and slogans into the world?

The contradictions that evolved from these attitudes and primitive arguments, even from respected politicians, represent the measure of ignorance which permitted the denial of the truth about Germany, or rather the National Socialist movement. Already decades before 1933 had the managers of "public opinion" been engaged in non-stop conditioning of public thinking, and after 1945, with ever increasing self-satisfaction, they inundated all of the public life worldwide.

Those politicians and journalists, having indulged for decades in these grotesque smear campaigns, will need to examine their deeds now more closely and objectively in view of the Second World War and in view of the portentous world political situation. They should ask themselves to what extent they – they personally – contributed, whether through negligence or deliberately, to the worsening of international tensions at a time when they – without any investigation of proof – were spreading falsehood under their seal of authority and then thoughtlessly determined a foreign policy and direction that may have furthered their own career, but which proved detrimental to the destiny of nations. Starting out from power interests, they exploited feelings of inferiority, antipathy and envy in order to incite fear, thus bringing on a psychosis that would leave no room for objectivity and level-headedness. They attributed every imaginable quality and every virtue to themselves whilst refusing outright to recognise those of the other side. They, above all, have forfeited the right to be scandalised by Hitler's "methods" … They, to wit, did not only endorse the upholding of a state of injustice in Europe, but they also showed no scruple when it came to keeping Germany down with combined forces and with every possible means to hand.

The slanderers of the German Reich and the German people made no distinction between the German Monarchy, the Weimar Republic, or the Third Reich. The tenor and form of their songs of hate about Hitler were

barely different from those of the turn of the century and after 1918. A perusal of newspapers or books of all the various nations in those days will clearly testify which one of the nations in question during all the years has practiced more self-control, has demonstrated more willingness for reconciliation and has shown more magnanimity. It was Germany! Furthermore, it also gives a clear proof of the places where warmongering politicians, the military and journalists were ruling the roost: It was in the countries of the Versailles Victors and their allies!

Germany has always recognised and valued Great Britain as a brother nation, has courted France as a culturally highly advanced neighbour, has admired the United States for their economic and technological achievements, has recognised and emphasised the need for a peaceable co-existence with Poland – before 1933 as well as during the time of Hitler. These countries, however, did not shy away – although Germany had given the world a great many outstanding scientists and artists and thus a rich culture – from putting her as "a nation of barbarians" in the stocks of "public world opinion" – already before Hitler, before the First World War, but especially since "the return to barbarism" in 1933. No German government, either before or after 1918, that is to say in spite of an unjust Versailles "Treaty" and post-war politics, incited hatred against the Reich's former enemies. Such conduct was reserved for the political and journalistic spokespersons of the other side. They were hurling their hatred, their lies and defamations, year in, year out, in frightening dedication at the whole German nation, while thinking themselves to be paragons of virtue. Whereas German literature – also in Hitler's time – was filled with respect for other peoples' national traditions, notions of reconciliation, love of the scientific approach and historical truths, beyond her borders a hate-filled tendency was encouraged that was teaching an historical enmity against the German people and the German right to life in countless books, newspapers and magazines. (Naturally, there were a few exceptions on both sides.)

One of the spokespersons of many years' standing was Winston Churchill! While he, in his capacity as the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, was supporting France's bullying victor politics and the war reparations while refusing any concessions to the Weimar Republic, he later on turned against this "lethargy and folly."[109] Temporarily full of admiration

for Hitler, already by October 1938, after the Munich conference, "he wanted to come to blows."[110]

> "Churchill presumably would have gone to war with Germany at the time of Munich."[111]

If Hitler succeeded in establishing good relations with neighbouring states, if he made steps toward true peace with them, Churchill, never at a loss for "reasons," declared that those countries had accepted German proposals only "…in fear of the rise of the Nazi power..."[112] From emphatic critic of the "Polish Corridor," Churchill changed to the fiercest opponent of Germany's wished-for return of the German city of Danzig and the building of an extraterritorial motorway through West Prussia, a wish that was far more modest than Hitler's former proposal and which was regarded as a necessary peace settlement.[113]

Churchill, who had noted that

> "...everyone can see how Communism rots the soul of a nation; how it makes it abject and hungry in peace and proves it base and abominable in war… it might well herald a return to the Dark Ages when every vestige of human progress during two thousand years would be engulfed,"[114]

could barely check his enthusiasm, when in 1939 Neville Chamberlain shook the "blood-stained hand of Bolshevism" and was trying to incorporate "the slavery that was worse than death" into his military alliance system. [114] He again changed his mind with regard to the Soviets during the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-1940, only to do another about-turn at the outset of the German-Russian war in 1941, hastily making a "pact with the Devil" to defeat Hitler regardless of the consequences for the British Empire. [114+115] His motto:

> "I have only one purpose, the destruction of Hitler, and my life is much simplified thereby."[116]

Later, upon the discovery in May 1943 of the mass graves in Katyn forest where over 10,000 Polish officers were found to have been shot in the neck (more than 4,000 bodies had been exhumed), Churchill "justified" his ideological leapfrogging to his exiled Polish "friends":

> "'The Bolshevists can be very cruel.' He added, however, that their ruthlessness is a source of strength, and to our advantage as far as destroying the Germans is concerned."[117]

Ultimately, the "sole test of the fitness of an ally was the possible military and material aid that he might give at the moment, whether he be monarchist, Fascist or Communist – presumably even a cannibal."[118]

Churchill, for more than twenty years a pioneer against Bolshevism and of "freedom for the small nations," was now directing in grandiloquent self-satisfaction "the chorus of Hosannas and Hallelujahs as the Red Army swept over Poland, East Prussia."[119] Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and the Balkan States and embedded itself in Central Europe.

His motto from the First World War remained unchanged:

> "'This,' he said, with a wave of his hand to the charts on the wall so plainly betokening the war, 'this is what I live for.'…
>
> How often have we heard him say by way of encouragement in difficult circumstances, 'War is a game to be played with a smiling face.'"[120]

His philosophy, tailored to this his life's work is expounded in his memoirs:

> "'In wartime,' I said, 'truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies.' Stalin and his comrades greatly appreciated this remark when it was translated, and upon this note our formal conference ended gaily."[121]

As a favour to the Soviets, he denied his Polish "friends" the official acceptance of a public resolution that was calling for the acknowledgment of "principles of international law," since "that might provoke the Soviets."[122]

After 1945, after the Second World War and evidently after having read *Mein Kampf* belatedly, Churchill thought to have "killed the wrong pig" (as if the world were a slaughterhouse and England was the butcher).[123] Some months before, according to his then current opinion, he was praising the "right pig" at the Yalta conference:

> "This time I drink it with a warmer feeling than at previous meetings… We feel we have a friend [Stalin] whom we can trust..."[124]

Speaking in the House of Commons on 27 February 1945, a few weeks after Yalta:

> "The impression I brought back from the Crimea, and from all other contacts is that Marshal Stalin and the Soviet leaders wish to live in honourable friendship and equality with the western democracies. I also feel that their word is their bond. I know of no government which stands to its obligations more solidly than the Russian Soviet government. I absolutely decline to embark here on a discussion about Russian good faith."[125]

Several months later, on 7 November 1945, again in the House of Commons:

> "Here I wish to say how glad we all are to know and feel that Generalissimo Stalin has the wheel tightly in his hands steering his mighty ship. Personally, I cannot feel anything but a deep admiration for this truly great man, the father of his country, the ruler of its destiny in times of peace and war, and the victorious defender of life in these times of war."[126]

From the time of the First World War, Hitler had realised the absurdity of any German-British War, and of war in general. Winston Churchill becomes aware of this only after1945, when he described the Second World War as an "unnecessary war" and was demanding precisely that which the Germans had already tackled twenty to thirty years earlier, namely to erect a bulwark against Bolshevism.[127]

> "There never was a war more easy to prevent than this last horror through which we have passed."[128]

Britain should have shown more astuteness – according to his opinion – after the First World War, by keeping Germany permanently pinned down militarily speaking. Certainly, he was not at all inclined to concede to Germany equality in international law or to contribute in the slightest to the restoration of German honour and Germany's rights. He may have concluded after the war that the result in 1945 was different from that "for which Britain went to battle," and that the West, during the Cold War, had to protect the world "from the two giant marauders, war and tyranny"[129] – nevertheless, that this should be the consequential outcome of his own policies, he denied. Just as he refused to admit that it was exactly against these selfsame policies and these consequences that Germany had been fighting.

> "…Churchill could always turn on the orations to suit the occasion.
> …Consistency was never Churchill's strong point. But one might have expected him to remember what he had written on a previous page. He contradicted himself."[130]

It was not so much the actuality of an aggression, nor was it the extent of an aggression, and neither was it the motive or the immediate cause of an aggression that proved the decisive factor for Churchill – instead, for him it was only a question of who was the one guilty of an "aggression." The term "aggression," moreover, was given the widest possible interpretation (*e.g.* the return to the Reich of ethnic Germans, who had been arbitrarily detached from it and were put under undemocratic foreign rule), while at the same time the actual aggressions and quite obviously illegal conduct of the other side was not recognised. Not even ideologies or concepts of states were used as a yardstick, since the determining point for him regarding his views on these questions was purely the personal benefit at that moment in time.

Love for the small nations was never a deciding factor either, as he sacrificed these nations without a moment's hesitation to his personal interests.

> "This, coupled with Churchill's lack of any war ideals or post-war plan, shows the complete fraud in his pretensions to leading a great crusade for a 'free world.'"[131]

Under the pretext of a humanitarian act of concern, Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter – although a short time later he wished it to be interpreted as valid only for the British Empire. At the same time he not only condoned but ordered the systematic "wiping out" of open German cities, "every possible use of violence," "every degree of terror"[132] …"(who was) killing the most Germans (and suggest means by which we could help them) to kill more,"[133] put his stamp a few years later to the Morgenthau Plan and praised the expulsion of millions of Germans from their homelands as the "most satisfactory and permanent method"[134] which, however, was not based on any legal justification, but was meant as "compensation" for the territory Poland lost to the Soviet Union.[135]

> "There will be no more mixture of peoples which has caused endless quarrels. I am not alarmed by the reduction of the population. Six million Germans have lost their lives in the War. We can expect that by the end of the war many more will be killed, and there will be room for those who shall be expelled." [134]

Churchill in Yalta, 7 February 1945:

> "We have killed five or six million and we shall very likely kill an additional million before this war comes to an end. Because of this there should be enough room in Germany for the transfer of people who will surely be needed. With that we shall have no problem as long as the transfer remains in the proper proportion." [135]

Even with regard to nations of culture, these "Big Three" of the "civilised countries" were basing their policies on the "shopkeeper mentality" of horse-trading and compensating as in the far-off days of antiquity, when the vanquished were enslaved and became a marketable commodity, their homes the spoils of war. Only now this happened with one difference, namely, in the 20th century all was done in the name of humanity, of justice, of law-abiding states, of Christianity and democracy. Furthermore, it was happening not to some thousands of savage warriors, rather it was being perpetrated on millions of civilised European people. That during this "humane resettlement," as the expulsion was called in the Potsdam protocols, 3.8 million German people went to their death[136] (according to another inquiry almost 3 million[137]), that the remainder could come away

with their bare lives under the most gruesome circumstances, that during all of these happenings, all Germans – not for the first time in the 20th century – were regarded as outlaws, all of this does not seem to have burdened Churchill's conscience. Yes, indeed, it was even on the agenda of the "Big Three" that "during this resettlement the number of Germans must be considerably reduced"![138] The exiled Polish Prime Minister Mikolajczyk was given a "sedative" by Churchill:

> "Do not worry about the five or more million Germans... Stalin will take care of that. You will have no difficulties with them: they will have ceased to exist."[139]

On 30 June 1943, Churchill, "possessed by a destructive mania,"[140] declared in London:

> "What I understand by 'unconditional surrender' is that the Germans have no right to claim any special treatment."[141]

Whoever is acquainted with these facts and their initiators will also know who in reality the people were with a "philosophy of blood-lust, reminiscent of the times of barbarism." Churchill himself was one of their pioneers!

Deliberately did this man conceal fundamental truths at the time of the "Nuremberg War Crimes Trials" and supported numerous historical falsifications. Winston Churchill the Crusader, who supposedly had done all for "ethical principles" and in particular for "the deliverance of Christendom," admitted in the end to his faithful warriors:

> "I am not a religiously-minded man."[142]

Just as he had been without scruples when agitating for war against Germany, and later when directing it and when deciding the fate of his defeated enemy, or rather, when he was one of the influential decision makers, so did he deal with his ally Poland. In Yalta he admitted in 1945:

> "Personally the Poles do not interest me."[143]

Nonetheless, it seems that in 1939 the Poles did interest him, because with their help he could whip the British public and the British government into a war psychosis in order to "control the world" together with the U.S. President, as he stated in a telegram to Roosevelt even before he had become Prime Minister.[144] At the height of the war he made it known to the Poles through their Prime Minister Mikolajczyk that he had no further interest in them:

"You're no government.... You're a callous people who want to wreck Europe. I shall leave you to your own troubles.... You have only miserable, petty, selfish interests in mind... If you want to conquer Russia, we shall let you go your own way.... You ought to be in a lunatic asylum...."[145]

While the Polish army was expected to continue fighting for British objectives and interests, in London the Polish government in exile was to swallow, "in the name of high moral principles," every lie invented to discredit them, also from the British press and Members of Parliament.[146]

This was the time when Churchill declared to his *protégés* that there was no other alternative but the final demise of their nation. [146] When the Red Army moved into Poland in 1944 and Churchill was continually receiving alarming news concerning the forceful methods employed by the Bolsheviks, he issued instructions that "the public opinion" was to be distracted by increased atrocity propaganda against Germany.[147] Truly, the Poles held no more interest for him!

His French allies, too, were given notable proof of Churchill's "loyalty" when he gave orders to destroy the French fleet anchored at Mers-el-Kebir (near Oran) on 3 July 1940, and when he later had civilian cities in France bombed.[148]

At the same moment that he was displaying his disregard for the wounds and distress of a bleeding Europe and when he did not stop stressing his friendship with the Soviet Union, he was making preparations to again press weapons into German soldiers' hands for a possible fight against Bolshevism.[149]

Although Hitler was depicted as the "wrong pig," he nevertheless kept his place as the man who "wanted to conquer the world," in spite of the fact that he had never had these aspirations, that he had relinquished territories, that he had brought back "home into the Reich" expatriate groups of Germans, and that he had restricted himself in 1940 to only partly occupying France – and the French colonies not at all. Churchill, who reproached Hitler for having strengthened Germany to such a point where she could defend Europe alone or in conjunction with other nations against Bolshevism's determination to world conquest, was demanding for himself the leadership of "the Big Three," or rather, "Four Policemen," placed over all the countries in the world[150] – including Poland that he, "like a house on wheels," was pushing hither and thither, without ever consulting Poland.[151]

After an eight hour discussion with Winston Churchill at the end of May 1945, Truman's special envoy and former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow, Joseph E. Davies, noted:

> "I said that frankly, as I had listened to him inveigh so violently against the threat of Soviet domination and the spread of Communism in Europe, and disclose such a lack of confidence in the professions of good faith in Soviet leadership, I had wondered whether he, the Prime Minister, was now willing to declare to the world that he and Britain had made a mistake in not supporting Hitler, for as I understood him, he was now expressing the doctrine which Hitler and Goebbels had been proclaiming and reiterating for the past four years....
>
> Exactly the same conditions which he described and the same deductions were drawn from them as he now appeared to assert."[152]

When even well-known politicians resort to such extremes in their opinions and actions in the course of a few years, after previously having espoused and pushed through such goals, now still continue against every better judgment to dogmatise the slandering and defamations against their former enemy, then one cannot expect from them or their like-minded associates that they would assess the present situation correctly, that they would have drawn lessons from recent history or, indeed, have the requisite intellectual magnitude and moral qualifications essential for responsible politics!

Unfortunately, it was only after 1945 that British politicians understood correctly what was at the bottom of Churchill's agitating and put it into these pithy words:

The Manchester Guardian:

> "People may suspect that when politicians spend their time trying to create panic it is because their own case is too weak to stand on reason."[153]

Aneurin Bevan:

> "He [Churchill] is known as a very great stylist and one who reads his prose with delight.
>
> A reason why he moves gracefully across the pages is because he carries a lightweight of fact.
>
> He sub-edits history and if there is any disagreeable fact, overboard it goes. This has always been characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman …"[154]

Churchill himself:

> "This keeping alive of hatred is one of the worst injuries that can be done to the peace of the world, and any popularity gained thereby is a shame to the Member to attempt to gather it."[155]

It is highly unlikely that Churchill would have reached this understanding only later on in his life. Surely not even then would he have drawn any comparison with his own actions during the past decades, when the Second

World War was, to a large extent, instigated, nurtured and brutally conducted because of his songs of hate.

Vienna, Munich, Prague – Three Stages to War

Three events can be considered the three stages leading to the Second World War:

1. The union of Austria with the German Reich.
2. The Munich Conference at the end of September 1938.
3. Germany's occupation of Czechia on 15 March 1939.

All three events need to be objectively evaluated for their actual significance and placed in their right position in the wider context.

The *Anschluss* – Austrian Union with the Reich

Until the end of the Second World War, the Austrian population was German, thought, felt and spoke German. Vienna had been the German Reich's capital for half a millennium, nearly ten times as long as Berlin. Only from 1806 to 1815 and from 1866 to 1938 had Austria during the course of her history not been in either a national or a federal union with the rest of Germany. On 12 November 1918 the Austrian National Assembly decided unanimously on union with the German Reich. The new State was called by the National Assembly in 1918 "German-Austria" (*Deutsch-Österreich*).

At Versailles the victors had denied the Austrian people their right to self-determination. The union, or rather the reunification, with Germany was forbidden, likewise the name "*Deutsch-Österreich*." Austrian Chancellor Karl Renner, a Social Democrat, declared at a session of the National Assembly in Vienna on 6 September 1919:

> "*Deutsch-Österreich* shall never abandon her objective of attaining, through peaceful political means, reunification with the German Reich."[156]

On 4 October 1922, Renner claimed in view of the credits as guaranteed to Austria by the League of Nations (Economic and Financial Section) "union (*Anschluss*) with the State to which in the nature of things we belong as the only solution."[157] Plebiscites were held in 1920-1921 in the regions of Carinthia, Tyrol, Salzburg and Steiermark, with 99% of the vote in favour of union with Germany. The plebiscites that ought to have taken place in the rest of the country were forbidden by France. As in this way Austria's desire

for reunification could be demonstrated, so the will of the German Reich was given an equally clear expression: Article 61, paragraph 2, of the Weimar Constitution dealt with the union of German Austria with the German Reich. It was kept as a formal component in the Weimar Constitution to bear witness to the high ideal of further national development, despite the fact that as a result of the Versailles victors' veto the implementation of paragraph 2 was suspended.

Also in the following years France forbade (in the age of European integration!), partly by applying economic pressure, every attempt at commercial rapprochement of Austria to Germany, specifically the planned Customs Union in 1931.

The Versailles Powers had in this fashion violated the will of the Austrian people. The Austrian people, in turn, had to suffer crises and unrest, the dangers of civil war, social and economic hardships, and even the banning of all political parties with the exception of the "National Patriotic Front" (*Vaterländische Front*). They basically had to live under a dictatorship with emergency laws. The Versailles victors therefore had no moral justification to once more interfere into Austrian-German matters with the excuse of the "preservation of democracy" in Austria, because since the Austrian Dollfuss government had revoked the Constitution at the beginning of March 1933 in a coup d'état and had put the country again under dictatorial rule – as had his successor Dr. Schuschnigg – Austria was no longer a "peaceful and democratic" state. The country had endured two bloody revolutions; full internment camps (as in Poland) – so-called transit camps (*Anhaltelager*) – which were basically concentration camps, went hand in hand with the dictatorship in power. Hence, a significant part of Austria's population which was radically opposed to their government endured real economic, moral and spiritual suffering – and this did not only include supporters of National Socialism! There had been no free elections in Austria between 1932 and 1938!

Without going into all the details of Austria's history since 1919, it has to be said that basically the "internal pressures on the Schuschnigg government in 1935 and early 1936 were becoming more and more noticeable."[158] The "internal pressure" was party political in nature, partly a result of the dire economic situation, and also a consequence of the country's isolation in foreign affairs. But it was also and in no small part

due to the fact that neighbouring Germany was prospering in those years, with drastically reduced unemployment and an increase in industrial production. The contrast with the chronic misery in Austria therefore made a reunification with Germany increasingly attractive.

As to the situation in foreign politics: Great Britain had little interest in bolstering a country that had stood behind Italy during the Abyssinian war of 1935-1936. The Popular Front in France could find no ideological ties with a Catholic, authoritarian system but was, nevertheless, mindful of her Versailles role of watchdog and co-determiner of Austria's affairs.

Conversely, the Austrian people were aware that France had done everything to obstruct their reunification with to the Reich and to prolong their economic misery. The Czechs, Slovaks, Rumanians, Slovenes, Serbs and Croats, on the other hand, had only recently shed the monarchical grip of Austria-Hungary, hence were not too eager to enter into a friendly alliance with Vienna.

> "Everything taking place in the thirties is as such only the logical development of Versailles and St. Germain. The breaking-up of the Danube Monarchy has turned Europe east of the Rhine into a bedlam of contradictory interests, and in the end it was the weakest that was most negatively affected by the repercussions: Austria. Only the rivalries among the big powers have prevented the collapse of the artificial system up to now and have thus kept Austria alive.
>
> Austria, being pushed hither and thither, being used as buffer, by herself she can do nothing. Her only support is Italy. This backing falls, when Mussolini decides on an attack against Abyssinia. Instead of doing battle with Hitler, it now becomes unavoidable that an attempt has to be made to reach an agreement with Hitler that would keep Austria going.
>
> The channel for this endeavour will be Schuschnigg – for four years he grapples with the solution of a problem that is simply insoluble, because the nationalistic principle is ideologically irreconcilable with the existence of a second German state, and because it is Hitler in whose hands lies the real power for putting his ideology into practice." [158]

Finally Hitler and Schuschnigg signed an agreement on 11 July 1936 which provided parity of interests between Austria and the German Reich. It was meant to stop the meddling into the internal affairs of each other, planned for the recognition of the independence and a stimulation of the economic and cultural exchanges between the two countries. But the constantly shifting balance of internal and external politics, already apparent before the signing, continued to the disadvantage of the Austrian government.

> "It was agreed to lift the ban on certain newspapers....
>
> A deluge of National Socialist propaganda is showered upon Austria from 11 July 1936 onward, all quite legitimate and within the framework of the treaty. What does it matter if the Austrian newspapers authorised for sale in Germany, obedient and faithful to their government, sing the praises of the Austrian citizen? The Germans do not read these newspapers and, in any

case, it is not they who are asking to be united with Austria. The 1,000-mark embargo is lifted and the intolerable dwindling of tourism is slackening somewhat, but instead every German tourist coming here is an intentional or unintentional propaganda campaigner. Swastika flags on automobiles or on knapsacks – German nationals are naturally allowed to exhibit the Swastika flag…

…but they are arriving here as both voluntary and involuntary living proof, demonstrating the rebuilding work of National Socialism...

They constitute a permanent form of unification propaganda for the Austrians, who day by day experience the effects of economic crisis, the barely reduced unemployment figures, political insecurity on the national level and general discontent of a large section of the population with an authoritarian regime...

But, that the 15,583 prisoners, for example, released on 1 January 1937, would still be fanatical National Socialist, obviously seems to have been forgotten."[159]

Something else has to be considered:

"Three points of this [July 1936] treaty were published – recognition of Austrian sovereignty by Germany, mutual non-interference in internal affairs, and the conclusion that Austria's foreign policy is based on the fact that Austria considers herself to be a German state. But much more important were the unpublished addenda. These concerned calling off their mutual press-war – which in the main was only respected by Germany – amnesty for the numerous political prisoners in Austria and other matters. However, a determining factor in the addenda was that Austria had agreed to assign some part of the government's responsibility to the 'National Opposition.' That 'National Opposition' being now, after Hitler's coming to power in Germany, of course, the Austrian National Socialists. Furthermore, it was agreed that at a given time – no date was fixed as yet – a plebiscite should be held on the question of union of Austria with the Reich. Hitler took this treaty absolutely seriously. He was convinced that, along with the unpublished addenda, it would eventually lead to the formation of a government of 'national unity' as he termed it. He also firmly believed that the vote in the prospective plebiscite would be at least 70% in favour of unification of the two states.

But it is clear now, a year and a half after the signing of the treaty, that the Austrian government had interpreted the treaty altogether differently from Hitler. For the government in Vienna, the emphasis was placed on the acknowledged national sovereignty and the mutual non-interference in internal affairs, but not on the participation of the 'National Opposition' in government matters and still less on the future holding of a plebiscite for unification with Germany, which most likely would have meant the end of the Austrian government."[160]

These are, in fact, some of the reasons that had induced Chancellor Schuschnigg, in December 1937, to suggest a personal discussion with Hitler, who accepted this idea, transmitted to him via his Ambassador in Vienna, Franz von Papen. In February 1938 Hitler invited Dr. Schuschnigg to Berchtesgaden.[161] The Austrian Chancellor started on his journey after having first informed Mussolini and the British and French Ambassadors of his intention and having in turn received their consent.[162] During his meeting with Dr. Schuschnigg, Hitler did not request the annexation of Austria to the German Reich, but merely stressed the importance of a German awareness in peaceable domestic politics combined with an economically sensible policy in Austria. He did not even insist that the NSDAP be permitted again in Austria. He did, on the other hand, ask

Schuschnigg not to drive the Austrian National Socialists underground by means of forcible exclusion from the Unity Party (*Einheitspartei*), the "Patriotic Front." While Hitler may have "exerted pressure" on the Austrian Chancellor during the meeting, and while he may also have conferred with some of his generals during a recess, this does not, however, entitle any third party to assume the role of moraliser or judge regarding the manner as to how two statesmen have to reach an agreement and what practices during negotiations may or may not be permitted. Hitler was by far the stronger and the more competent in these talks with Dr. Schuschnigg, and this would naturally be reflected in the result of the negotiations – with or without any "pressure."

> "Untenable is Schuschnigg's assertion that he would have been confronted with an entirely new situation at the Berghof. Already from the Göring letters he would have been aware of Hitler's demands, and when a comparison is drawn between his preliminary treaty (domestic policies proposed in view of harmonising German and Austrian interests) and Hitler's program, then it will be shown how minor the differences actually are....
>
> A comparison of the concluded treaty with the preliminary one shows that only in the question of the replacement of the Minister of the Interior and Police a large concession would have been made, one that went beyond what Schuschnigg had himself foreseen."[163]

Franz von Papen confirmed that the conference was concluded to everyone's satisfaction and, in a report written two days after the meeting, that

> "Schuschnigg, deeply impressed, engaged in a sharp contest yesterday and today with all the opponents of pacification, since he is determined to carry out his Berchtesgaden pledge."[164]

In answer to a question from his Chief of police, Skubl, as to what impression Hitler had made on him, Schuschnigg said:

> "I must say he has something of a far-seeing prophet about him."[165]
>
> "At Berchtesgaden, Schuschnigg did not yet commit himself definitely, but stated that he would consider himself bound by the agreement only after three days, for he had first to discuss it with his government."[166]

On 15 February 1938, the Austrian government notified Hitler that the terms of Berchtesgaden had been accepted, and on 18 February that the political clauses had already been enforced.[167] Hitler, too, kept to the agreement, and he withdrew the Party leader, Leopold, from Austria so as to make it impossible for the NSDAP in Austria to be legally active.

> "The Austrian affair was under weigh [underway]. It had not been launched by Hitler. It was sprung on him by surprise, and he took a chance, as always. There was no planned aggression, only hasty improvisation...
>
> The following day Hitler kept his part of the bargain: Leopold, the leader of the Nazi underground in Austria, was summoned before Hitler; told that his activities had been 'insane';

and ordered to leave Austria along with his principal associates. A few days later Hitler saw these Nazis again, gave them another rating, and insisted that 'the evolutionary course be taken, whether or not the possibility of success could today be foreseen. The Protocol signed by Schuschnigg was so far-reaching that, if completely carried out, the Austrian problem would be automatically solved.'

Hitler was satisfied. He made no preparations for action, but waited impassively for the automatic solution to mature."[168]

The Austrian Chancellor conducted "a resolute campaign to play down the February crisis…,"[169] informing his envoys abroad that the Berchtesgaden conference had been concluded satisfactorily and telling them to rebuff any foreign criticism of alleged appeasement.

"The initial propaganda line of the 'Fatherland Front' had actually gone so far as to portray Berchtesgaden as an 'unqualified personal success' for Schuschnigg."[170]

Even Eden, the antagonistic opponent of an appeasement policy, who had resigned his post as Foreign Minister on 20 February 1938 in protest against the too lenient course taken by the British government with regard to the Italian and Austrian question, was still stating on 17 and 18 February in the House of Commons

"that no approach for advice or support had come to London from Vienna, either before the Berchtesgaden meeting, or after it."[171]

"According to information in my possession, Austria has succeeded at Berchtesgaden in clarifying her relations with the German Reich in what we may hope is a favourable and durable fashion, through direct and detailed talks between the two heads of Government without the slightest disturbance." [171]

On 14 February, the London *Times* commented that:

"... there is no need to quarrel with an agreement with which the Führer, the Duce and Herr von Schuschnigg are all apparently content."[172]

and added a few days later in a follow-up editorial:

"Fundamentally, a close understanding between the two German States is the most natural thing possible. One of the least rational, most brittle and most provocative artificialities of the peace settlement was the ban on the incorporation of Austria in the Reich... These crows are coming home to roost.

Austria can never be anti-Germanic. Ultimately this is the real strength of the Reich claims upon it and the real difficulty of an Austrian Chancellor when he has to defend and define Austrian independence." [172]

Hitler had announced his intention to address the Reichstag on 20 February 1938, and had assured Schuschnigg, at his departure from the Berghof, that in this speech he would "mention the meeting with some favourable comment."[173] For the first time, a speech by Hitler was broadcast on Austrian radio.[174] Apart from other matters Hitler declared:

"In conjunction with this [relaxation of the strain in our relations with one another] there should be a practical contribution toward peace by granting a general amnesty, and by creating a better understanding between the two States through a still closer friendly co-operation in as many different fields as possible – political, personal, and economic – all complementary to and within the framework of the Agreement of July 11 [1936].

I express in this connection before the German people my sincere thanks to the Austrian Chancellor for his great understanding and the warm-hearted willingness with which he accepted my invitation and worked with me, so that we might discover a way of serving the best interests of the two countries; for, after all, it is the interest of the whole German people, whose sons we all are, wherever we may have been born."[175]

On 24 February, that is only a few days later, Chancellor Schuschnigg replied, also in a radio broadcast, with a speech to the 'parliament' that no one had elected:

"Austria did reach with the concessions at Berchtesgaden, so he said, 'those limits where we have to order a stop and must say: This far and no further!' As if consciously trying to provoke Hitler, he declared that Austria was never going to relinquish her independence. His speech ended with these words: 'Red-White-Red to the death!'"[176]

Once again the Austrian question was moved centre-stage in the European discussions.[177] In the meantime, Schuschnigg had been put under heavy pressure by London to cancel his agreement with the German Reich.[178] In particular, he was pressured by a personal friend, French Ambassador Gabriel Puaux,[179] but other diplomats also harassed him ("The only one that kept quiet and was nowhere to be seen was the German Ambassador, Herr von Papen."[180]) to admit that he had been blackmailed by Hitler.

"Whence did this knowledge come?

It was said that the Intelligence Service on the spot was extremely well informed. The attempts at toning down, undertaken by Dr [Guido] Schmidt – by now Foreign Minister – and myself to prevent any melodramatic reporting, were not readily believed."[181]

"The economic barometer was to react very quickly: fearful runs on the banks and building societies, cancellations of credits by foreign firms.

Postal work increased to thousands of telegrams and letters. Alarm signals, especially from Styria.... The negative forecasts outnumbered the optimistic ones...

Day after day the banks and building societies reported the withdrawal of millions of Schillings. There were notifications of cancellations, especially from overseas. Foreigners were leaving the country....

Inevitably, this resulted in a situation that became politically untenable, both at home and abroad.

Foreign relations were affected, above all on the economic level, because of a looming threat that presented all the disadvantages of the *Anschluss*, in particular foreign boycott from abroad, without the advantages of an extensive, unified economic area."[182]

But the foreign pressures on the Austrian government had still graver consequences.

The British, French and American newspapers that could be bought in Vienna announced to the Austrian people "the first act of their tragedy":

> "The result was a mood of panic and disillusionment that no 'Fatherland Front' propaganda could dispel. …the new government immediately came under fire from no less a quarter than the Papal Nuncio in Vienna, and talk of the Chancellor's resignation cropped up within 48 hours of his return to office."[183]

The French Envoy in Vienna, Puaux, officially informed Schuschnigg that France "regarded the independence of Austria as indispensable to the peace and stability of Europe."[184]

> "In fact, something much more substantial was being debated at the time in Paris." [184]

It was nothing less than the attempt by France "to organise joint action with London on Austria's behalf." [184] Austria's press Attaché in Paris, Dr. Fuchs, apparently succumbing to this situation, even refused to publish the official appeasement reports arriving from Vienna, so that he had to be threatened with removal from office. [184] Similarly influenced and also reacting awkwardly toward his government was the Austrian Envoy in Paris, Vollgruber. But he had already been worked on by the Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry and censured by a criticism that "could [not] have been made more searching." [184]

> "…on the very day that Léger's warning reached Vienna, Schuschnigg took the decision to scrap his entire policy of appeasement, and challenge Hitler before the world with his famous plebiscite." [184]

What was the reaction in England? While the British papers at the time of the Berchtesgaden conference (12 February) and shortly after were quite restrained regarding the German-Austrian agreement, if not agreeable, so a few days later (beginning on 16 February)

> "the Austrian Government's campaign of deception was swept away overnight. …The *Daily Express* spoke of the 'outright ultimatum' with which Austria had been presented, while the *Daily Mail* warned of the dangers facing Czechoslovakia, if Hitler should succeed in his aim of 'amalgamating' Austria and Germany."[185]

Other newspapers followed with cutting editorials. *The Times*, as already quoted, remained an exception. However, "the Socialist Opposition to Her Majesty's government now tried to make a major issue out of British policy toward Austria"[186] and so induce London to act. "During those same 48 hours" this initiative also spread to numerous supporters of the government. [186] In a closed session of the Commons' Foreign Affairs Committee some rather harsh words were exchanged. The indignation voiced ranged from

appeals "to face the fact that adventurism is now in the ascendant in Nazi Germany and that the cautious people have been proved wrong" to Winston Churchill's declaration that "it was time now to call a halt." [186]

> "… a majority of the hundred…were prepared to take up the cudgels against Hitler then and there, if given the slightest encouragement. The statement [jointly issued by them] made a blunt appeal, 'in the light of recent events,' for 'a more positive attitude by this country in Europe.' The Foreign Affairs Committee, it added, was anxious that 'the Government should remain in no doubt of the future support of the Party in such an eventuality.'
>
> … This invitation to action was addressed to the Prime Minister of Britain by one of his principal Parliamentary Committees. It applied just as well to the Chancellor of Austria." [186]

Although Chamberlain was willing to tone down this kind of language, he only partly succeeded. How strong was the pressure he was put under by Parliament and the parties, but also by members of the government, was made evident by the fact that his Foreign Minister Eden, together with Undersecretary of State, Lord Cranborne, "resigned in protest against their Prime Minister's 'soft' policy towards the Axis."[187]

To this diverse pressure from London and Paris, after the "most disturbing debates in the Chamber of Deputies" and the warnings sent to Vienna, to the pressure of a world press that was getting worked up, to an economic boycott and to the political events at home, Schuschnigg had to respond one way or another.[188] He did an about-turn and indeed covertly announced a future opposing of Germany.[189]

It has to be stressed that to this day none of the propagandists has regarded this 'diverse pressure,' these 'methods of violating small nations' as 'illegitimate political means,' nor indeed has even drawn effective attention to this game of intrigue! Even if later on in his memoirs Schuschnigg would mention only in passing these foreign demonstrations while emphasising, on the other hand, the internal political complications, it is historically indisputable, however, that the Austrian Chancellor had originally not intended a course change and only altered course under the influence from abroad. In the end, this reversal was done in the belief that the Western Powers would militarily safeguard the independence of his regime. In his memoirs, Schuschnigg wrote:

> "For this reason I decided on a plebiscite ... It was the last straw when it was evident that it was more and more difficult to parry the unrest among the workers. If the Swastika as an ethos symbol is allowed, why not then the 'Three Arrows' of the Socialists and dozens of other emblems? There was the fear that a hopeless mess could develop that would not have been prevented without bloody clashes. This was to be avoided at all costs. I have consistently turned down everything

that could call the slightest attention to the National Front. I wanted no political parties; this was the only way at the time to prevent the NSDAP. ...

The Berchtesgaden Agreement was carried out to the letter:

General Situation:

(a) Police and the Executive (in Austria: forces of law and order) powerless; since 12 February, the day of Berchtesgaden, no political sentencing had taken place; all political prisoners, also violent criminals, murderers and perjurers of the Executive are pardoned. This would have to produce a corresponding effect.

(b) Parts of the Civil Service, the government administration and the finance and school administration… were openly refusing obedience and were appealing to Minister Seyss and the political department of the National Front that I had established at the time.

(c) Minister Seyss promised order without enforcing it.

(d) Economic concern, demonstrations and an unstable situation:

The defencelessness of the Patriotic Front, whose loyal members and followers of the government could no longer be heard; and because of that, they were becoming increasingly discouraged."[190]

Dr. Schuschnigg had announced at a moment's notice on 9 March 1938 his referendum to take place only four days later, on 13 March 1938. The announcement was deliberately vague, with a nod to separatism. But most of all: it would have been pretty much impossible to prepare, organise and conduct a plebiscite in such a short period of time. As such it was even unconstitutional.[191] In his announcement Schuschnigg called

"For a free and German, independent and Socialist, for a Christian and united Austria! For peace and jobs and equal rights for all who declare themselves for the people and the Fatherland!"

He had thus destroyed, without a doubt, the spirit and the essence of the agreement with Hitler and thus had brought the situation in the land to a head. At that time there were already 40,000 Austrian refugees in the Reich.[192]

"The date for the ballot is fixed for the following Sunday, 13 March. A country which for the past five years has been governed by an authoritarian regime, where there have been no democratic elections for the past six years, where neither electoral registers nor any democratic parties are in existence, is now expected to carry out within a few days' time an election which is claimed to be accepted by the world at large as an irrefutable, lawful and unquestionable declaration. The government is going to the country after practically excluding the people from all political activity for four years. The idea is sheer madness."[193]

After the signing of the Berchtesgaden agreement, Dr. Schuschnigg could have resigned in favour of President Miklas and requested that he revoke it. That at least would have shown a clear sense of direction, even though it would have contradicted Dr. Schuschnigg's own statement that he was not an opponent of unification. The procedure adopted by Schuschnigg and the refusal to hold a genuine referendum three or four weeks later, as was demanded subsequently by Hitler on March 10, would now have in its wake

the well-known chain reactions that were to realise Austria's *Anschluss* to the Reich.

After the conduct of Dr. Schuschnigg, "he [Hitler] must either act or be humiliated ..."

> "The crisis of March 1938 was provoked by Schuschnigg, not by Hitler. There had been no German preparations, military or diplomatic. Everything was improvised in a couple of days."[194]
>
> "It was still believed in Berlin throughout the day of the 10th of March that, by changing the date and the text of the referendum, a solution had been found that made it still possible to continue the Berchtesgaden policy with Schuschnigg. Alone the consideration for Mussolini made Hitler keep to his previous program with the tenacity of which he was capable in such situations....
>
> From the diary of the future General Jodl we know that only on 11 March 1938, midday at 1.00 p.m., did Hitler sign the military document known by the codename 'Operation Otto,' which ordered a deployment of troops in the event of an intervention in Austria."[195]

General von Manstein had to unexpectedly draw up on the 10th of March a plan of operation of the type not requiring a mobilisation and not requiring any preparations.[196] Schuschnigg's refusal to acknowledge the impending revolt in Austria against a referendum which could not be carried out lawfully – he had not even informed his Cabinet of his solitary decision, let alone asked them for advice![197] – his rejection of a postponement, justifiably gave Hitler license, at the latest from the 10th of March onward, to accuse Schuschnigg of having violated the Berchtesgaden treaty and thus having provoked Hitler.

On 11 March, Schuschnigg ordered the cancellation of the referendum, accompanying the decision with extraordinary security measures and a curfew after 8.00 p.m. The annulment of the referendum was to give the impression – and was obviously designed to produce this effect! – to demonstrate principally to France, Britain and the U.S. that Austria's yielding was due to an "act of violence" on the part the Reich government. Being familiar with the diplomatic correspondence of the preceding days and weeks, Schuschnigg was fully aware, after all, that the Western Powers, France especially, would only come to Austria's defence – but in that event with all military might –

> "if it were a clear case of violation, that is, if the Austrian government considers that her rights have been violated."[198]

The "bomb" – as Mussolini described the rushed plebiscite – really did explode "in the hands of Schuschnigg."[199] The civil war which had been contemplated by Dr. Schuschnigg shortly before his resignation did not take place.[200]

When on 11 March 1938 Hitler gave his troops the order to march into Austria, he did not have, as yet, a clear picture with respect to the future constitutional development of his homeland.[201] He could neither have predicted with any certainty (apart from the occupation of the Rhineland 1936) a "War of Flowers" which now happened for the first time in human history, nor could he have anticipated the reaction abroad. The opinion of the British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, was already known to him, since he – perhaps by order or with the approval of his government –

> "made no secret of his desire to see Germany and Austria united in one state."[202]

In the end it was the foreign press that was putting Austria's *Anschluss* on Hitler's lips. At the same time, the yielding of Britain and France together with the demonstration of friendship from Italy was made evident. These three factors combined finally persuaded him to carry through the reunification of Austria with Germany.

> "The rejoicing crowds greeting Hitler on his entry into Vienna are not mentioned in Austria's teaching curriculum. The *Anschluss*, which at the time had the approval of almost all the powers of the completely run-down State, from the Socialist Renner to Cardinal Innitzer, is today regarded simply as military occupation."[203]

The union of Austria with the Reich was neither a question of annexation in the usual sense of linguistic usage nor a highway campaign of robbery, nor was it the enslaving of a free people, nor the elimination of a "democratic" system of government, but rather it was the realisation of the longings and of the rights of the Austrian people, in existence and nurtured long before Hitler. Furthermore, when examined in the context of international law, it was a lawful action according to the principle of the national right of self-determination.

> "Let us suppose that Hitler had bound himself by his first promise – to maintain Austrian independence. What would have resulted? The internal feuds would assuredly have gone on and burst into such increasing conflagration that much misery and bloodshed would have followed, with only one end to it all – the Nazi element would have won the day and brought about the '*Anschluss*' themselves. Hitler's action saved all that distress. He saw what was the only cure and the inevitable destiny of Austria and acted accordingly. The other powers, looking on, might inveigh against his infringement of another state's sovereignty and his virtual annexation of her territory, but they would hardly pretend, in face of facts, that he had quelled an unwilling Austria by force of arms, or had done anything but bring unity and order to the ancient heart of Europe."[204]
>
> "...The reunification with Germany had long been a matter near to the heart of the Austrians. Austria would already have been part of the German Reich if the victorious nations had not simply prohibited it after the First World War. And this in spite of the fact that the National Assembly in November 1918 already had unanimously accepted the resolution, made in accordance with the will of the people, stating:

'German-Austria is a part of the German Republic.'

Until Hitler took power in 1933, the Social-Democrats were the most eager supporters of union. But union with the Germany of Hitler – that was something else."[205]

Munich – The Reunification with the Sudetenland

The conference held in Munich on 29 September 1938, at which Chamberlain for Britain, Daladier for France, Mussolini for Italy and Hitler for Germany had set down the procedure for the transfer of the Sudetenland to Germany, was the consequence of the Versailles politics that could have no long-lasting existence:

1. Because no state is viable which, to a large extent, comprises ethnic minorities and which discriminates and terrorises these minorities with all its state-approved means.[206]
2. Because in a state where the leadership speaks of "democracy," "equality," "autonomy" and the "will to mutual understanding," but practices the exact opposite, there can be no thought of reconciliation in the field of domestic affairs.
3. Because the largest ethnic group in the state – the Czechs – failed to gain the friendship of a single one of the minority groups nor of any of the neighbouring countries; in fact, these minorities (principally the Slovaks) and neighbouring Poland and Hungary were even working, on their own initiative, toward the destruction of the Czecho-Slovak state during the crucial year of 1938.[207]
4. Because the creation of a state for purely strategic reasons, as was done by the victorious powers after World War One,[208] was bound to founder as soon as decisive strategic weights would shift in the course of time. Thus, in 1938 the following strategic aspects changed in comparison with 1919:

a) From a military standpoint, Germany had to be taken seriously again in 1938, while France was weakened in her internal affairs.

b) The *Anschluss* of Austria led to an almost complete geographical encirclement of Czecho-Slovakia and opened up a border for Germany which was not fortified on the Czech side.

c) The German anti-French, defensive West Wall (*Siegfried Line*), under construction since 1936 and hastily accelerated after the May 1938

crisis that had been provoked by Benes, was nearing completion in September 1938 and, therefore, would frustrate any prompt assistance from France to be given to the Prague government.

d) The strategic importance of Czecho-Slovakia to France and Britain was dependent upon whether approximately 40 German divisions in the area of Bohemia-Moravia could be pinned down until the French army could make a successful breakthrough across the Rhine. The *Anschluss*, the Siegfried Line, the superiority of the German air force over the Czech air force and the secure leadership situation in Germany nullified these requirements.

e) The Prague government had produced during its 20-year rule such an aggravated domestic situation that the soldiers – from its ethnic minorities – could no longer be considered as reliable.[209]

f) Great Britain, in 1918 a joint victor with France, more or less withdrew from the European continent after the First World War, concentrating on her Empire, and thus was neither willing nor prepared in 1938 to get drawn into a European war over Czecho-Slovakia; especially since it was perfectly plain for the British politicians that Stalin would exploit such a conflict for the implementation of Bolshevist world revolutionary interests.

g) France was not able in 1938 to rally any support for Czecho-Slovakia from Eastern Europe, since none of these countries was willing – and they made this very clear to Paris! – to lift a finger for the Prague government. These countries categorically refused to give any concession for Soviet troops to be passing through their territories. Poland and Rumania especially feared "that the secret intention behind Russia's request was to recapture Bessarabia without a fight."[210] Poland, incidentally, was making demands herself on Czecho-Slovakia. Furthermore, Poland was also no longer in tune with France, not having gotten over the French-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact of 1935/36.

> "The adjoining countries were hostile or indifferent toward Czecho-Slovakia. Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia openly declared their hostility toward the Prague government. Rumania refused to allow Russian troops to pass through her territory. Thus the conditions set forth by Russia for her intervention [in favour of Czecho-Slovakia] were not fulfilled."[211]

h) The military and political allies of Czecho-Slovakia – France and Great Britain – did an about-turn against their Czech *protégé* because of the strategic shift in the balance of power in September 1938. With this action, they thwarted Benes' intentions to solve his problems of the internal affairs by means of a European war.[212]

The artificial creation of Czecho-Slovakia – in open violation of the right to self-determination of almost 50% of its population which never wanted to co-exist in a state ruled by the Czechs – was questionable from the beginning. The Sudeten area, which had been predominantly inhabited by ethnic Germans for many centuries, had been a part of the First German Reich (until 1806), then of Austria-Hungary until 1918. Hence the Czech people had neither territorial or historical nor ethnic or cultural justifications to claim this region. When the Austrian monarchy disintegrated, all the peoples dwelling in it should have been allowed to exercise their promised right of self-determination, but the Czech majority at times violently forced the other minorities – mainly Slovaks, Germans and Hungarians – into their newly created state. History has since proven twice that this artificial state has never been viable without coercion, because at the end of the 20th century Czecho-Slovakia fell apart once more after the collapse of the repressive communist regime, releasing Slovakia into independence again.

The British Lord Chancellor, Lord Maugham, was to declare in the Munich conference debate in the House of Lords that Czecho-Slovakia, for which one had gone to the brink of war, should never have been created to begin with.[213] Viscount Rothermere, director of the Ministry of Information's press office at the time, judged similarly:

> "This caricature of a country under its Czech leaders has from the moment of its birth committed almost every conceivable folly."[214]

The British Foreign Minister, Lord Halifax, also was to inform on 9 September 1938 his Ambassador in Paris that one had to consider carefully

> "whether it was worthwhile to make war for something that nobody can maintain and that nobody seriously wants to restore."[215]

A Polish diplomat, Count Grzybowski, personal friend of the Polish Foreign Minister Beck, explained during a private conversation with his French colleague Coulondre on 26 May 1938, thus months before the Munich conference:

"Trying to save Czecho-Slovakia is a wild dream. Sooner or later she will collapse like a house of cards."[216]

Even Marshal Pilsudski has, ever since 1918, considered Czecho-Slovakia to be not viable – in the same way as he considered Austria to be not viable. For him the only question was which of the two states would disappear first.[217] The Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, had regarded Czecho-Slovakia, "with whom one cannot engage in politics anyway," merely as a European disgrace.[218] On 25-26 May 1938 – months before the Munich conference! – Polish diplomacy was to let the European governments know "that Czecho-Slovakia, an arbitrary combination of words, of several exceptionally mutually hostile minorities, was a country condemned to death."[219]

The foundation of this state whose "name of Czecho-Slovakia sounds outlandish…to English ears…"[220] and that was afflicted with the burden of enmity toward Germany,[221] was even more dubious, considering that the Czechs were known to describe the forcibly integrated minorities as "rebels," "immigrants," "settlers" etc. and were treating them as such.[222]

"Already at the peace negotiations after the First World War the Czech 'Memorandum 3' denied to the Sudeten Germans the right of self-determination, as they were held to be the descendants of immigrants and settlers."[223]

A Czech historian admitted the fact as well:

"The widespread belief that, without the capitulation of the Western Powers in Munich, Czecho-Slovakia could hold her own ground is not based upon facts. This is only one of the many propagandist legends which found their way into the public mind."[224]

Since Versailles (1919), the Czech antagonism toward German national traditions and culture was continually exacerbated by the Czechs' determination to inflict damage on that German entity living alongside the frontier. These Germans, who had been forced into that state mostly against their will but who had resigned themselves to the newly created order, [224] were treated socially, economically and culturally in such a way by the Czech authorities that would spoil the Germans' feeling of belonging to this state. This policy of "ethnic pressure" was designed to force the Germans out of the country.[225]

"From the beginning the Czechs considered themselves to be the people who represented the state and did not think it worthwhile to try to give the two main minorities – German and Slovak – the feeling that the new state was also theirs."[226]

The parliament, constitution and government of Czecho-Slovakia remained in force without any authorisation from the minority groups, and the parliamentary opposition continued without any influence in spite of election results to the contrary. Power was in the hands of the same small Czech group centred on Benes which "boosted the national egoism of the Czechs beyond measure,"[227] in spite of the advertising sign "democracy." The executives of the Czech parties not only called the constituent National Assembly, but also nominated the *Pétka* (National Constitutional Committee, consisting of five members), thus conducting government policy without taking the wishes of the population into account. [227]

> "The unification of the Germans in Czecho-Slovakia was not only the result of Hitler's coming to power in 1933, but was equally as well the consequence of the conduct displayed by the Czechs in the sphere of internal development of the state. Therefore, their efforts to obtain autonomy within the state were genuine, and the situation in 1938 was self-induced by Czecho-Slovakia when all German proposals for concord were rejected."[228]

The culture war of the Czech people was not directed against National Socialism but rather against German traditions and culture. Therefore, National Socialism could not have been responsible, especially since this fight for national identity had already begun in 1919. Many years before Hitler was politically influential, the Czech newspapers had adopted the attitude of disseminating texts of a thoroughly unfriendly tone such as these:

> "The 'Ceske slovo' of 29 October 1920 demanded that one ought not to give equal rights to the Germans, but rather 'have them hanged from gallows and candelabras.' 'Zlata Praha' stated on the occasion of the Sokol festival in 1919 that one ought to have the Germans 'flogged' across the border.
>
> 'Vonkov' regretted on 6 January 1926 that the Sudeten Germans had not taken up arms against the Czechs after the putsch in 1918, as that would have presented the best opportunity 'for sorting things out.'
>
> The official state newspaper 'Cesko-Slovenska' wrote in October 1921:
>
> 'The German minority in Brünn will melt away like a piece of ice in the sun and nothing can save them. To be contributing to the acceleration of this development is a self-evident duty of the Czech majority.'"[229]

At a military celebration in 1923 in Podersam a Czech speaker stated:

> "We Czechs must strive to seize all industry. For as long as the last chimney stack of German factories has not… disappeared, and as long as German assets are not all in our hands, until then we must fight." [229]

Up to 1936 there was no change for the better. For example, the Czech newspaper *Obrana Naroda* wrote on 15 April 1936:

"The borderland problem is not only a social question; the borderland problem is the reclaiming of over a third of our Fatherland back into the hands of our nation. The borderland problem is the populating of a third of our country with people from our nation, it is the augmentation of the current language frontier as far as the actual national borders, it is the construction of a superbly powerful, impregnable and dependable border area, a human stronghold comprising people of our race and blood."

Stráz Nroda of 13 March 1936:

"The gradual buying up of property in our border areas is the best means of securing Czech positions. The smallest piece of land that passes into Czech hands denotes a strengthening of the Czech element." [229]

This attitude, which had as a consequence that the Sudetenland under Czech rule had the highest infant mortality and the highest suicide rate in the world, was surely not an appropriate reaction to the favourable attention that had been given to the Czech people during the rule of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

"The secret of its well-being lay principally in the circumstance that 65 per cent of the industries of the old [Austrian] monarchy – which up to then had been the common property of fifty-four millions of people – now remained in the hands of an independent State of only fourteen million.

This is a further striking proof that the Slav nations were not exploited by the Habsburgs so much as was later pretended.

… the Czechs were the best-paid industrial workers, and the richest peasants were the Croats, whereas the standard of living in Tyrol, a purely German province, was always rather low."[230]

What happened after the defeat of Germany and Austria in 1918?

"In the same breath that democratic-humanistic phrases were being espoused, more than half a million Czechs were being transplanted to an area where they had to fulfil but one function: to be outposts for an aggressive Czech undertaking of huge proportions. In this manner there was forfeited … … 31% of the German territory in a chilly impounding, for which there was no means of legal redress and which, therefore, was nothing other than sheer plunder on a large scale, organised by the State and carried out under State authority.

From a political point of view it is utter madness to constantly convey into the already over-populated German crises areas an ever increasing inflow of people. We declare openly ('Young Socialist' Wenzel Jaksch, on 26 April 1936 at Bodenbach) that the discrimination against the Germans in the public service sector, in the language question and the whole of the administration has reached a point that in general is thought to be intolerable. The national running battle is continuing on all fronts and is polluting the domestic atmosphere."[231]

Utilising every public and socio-political opportunity, the Prague government systematically pressed the education policy into the service of national expansion. Consequently, two types of schools were established in the Sudeten German territories:

"… firstly, for the non-Czech ethnic groups alone, but then, however, also Czech schools which were not only meant for the children of the transferred Czechs living in the minority areas, but were also intended for the non-Czech children. By means of all kinds of social tempting and

pressurising of their parents, these non-Czech children were starting school there and eventually would become estranged from their own traditions and culture."[232]

Czecho-Slovakia was evaluated and viewed by Britain and France almost exclusively on the basis of a possible military deployment against Germany, not as a free state that might also at some stage have good relations with the Reich or that might at least be encouraged to adopt a reasonable line of conduct for the sake of peace in Europe. The culture war against the ethnic Germans instigated by the Czechs and the subsequent "crimes against humanity" were deliberately overlooked in the capitals of Western Europe.

In France the political leadership had other interests. In 1919 the French Marshal Foch had already declared, in his capacity as principal military advisor at the Versailles peace negotiations:

"You see [looking at a map of Czecho-Slovakia], here is a great bastion. You will not give me permission to extend the frontier to the Rhine, then at least leave me this bulwark."[233]

In his memoirs Churchill also admitted this attitude:

"The mere neutralisation of Czecho-Slovakia means the liberation of twenty-five German divisions, which will threaten the Western front; in addition to which it will open up for the triumphant Nazis the road to the Black Sea. ...

The subjugation of Czecho-Slovakia robbed the Allies…of twenty-one regular, fifteen or sixteen second-line divisions…"[234]

A historian corroborated that the old Czecho-Slovakia, allied to France and the Soviet Union, had been "a dagger pointed at Germany's heart, a hostile stronghold right inside German territory, a gate of entry of the Reich's' enemies."[235] She was created for this purpose.

When France with the conclusion of the German-Polish non-aggression and friendship treaty in January 1934 "lost 60 Polish divisions,"[236] she reinforced her efforts not to lose the forty Czech divisions and the only Central Eastern European war industry (Czecho-Slovakia had a share of over 8/9). These efforts were reflected in the endeavour

a. to reassure the Czech government again and again of France's firm resolve to stand by her contractual obligations to a confederate ally and, therefore, ready to aid her economically and to lend support in foreign and domestic affairs; and also
b. to urge Prague repeatedly to deter the minorities from obtaining any position in the government and all influential offices, thereby preserving the value of the Czech army as an ally. The motto for this was,

"to have Henlein in the Czech government would be the equivalent of the German military attaché assuming the role of deputy Chief of the Czech's Army General Staff."[237]

Eduard Benes sought revenge in his own way:

"…always supporting French policies and French interests on the League of Nations and elsewhere…
For twenty years President Benes had been the faithful ally and almost vassal of France…"[238]

A Czech historian was to admit:

"It was thought that the Peace of Versailles would be binding on Germany for all time, and that could not be. On the other hand, the existence of the newly formed States depended upon the Treaty. For this reason every opportunity was taken of fanning the flame of Franco-German animosity and preventing a rapprochement between Berlin and Paris. In order to maintain their status they [the new States] fought against any attempt to revise the obviously unjust rulings of the Versailles Treaty."[239]

Apart from September 1938, France never encouraged her Czech ally to seek reconciliation with Germany, but rather kept insisting for them to "remain tough." [237] A demand followed all the more eagerly by Benes, since he was aware that Germany would not risk a war with his country in the face of such a coalition. As a consequence, the activities against the Reich increased and an almost explosive escalation of the internal situation was developing, exacerbated when the Sudeten German *Heimatfront* (Sudeten German party) emerged at the May elections of 1935 as the strongest party of the entire Czecho-Slovakian state – but was still categorically excluded from the leadership of the state. Benes knew how to "justify" this too:

"In a democratic State it was the rights of individuals and not of any group as such which must be respected, and it would be impossible to admit totalitarian or authoritarian claims."[240]

His Prime Minister Hodza was equally adept in employing this vocabulary. He would not allow communal elections in the Sudetenland "so long as they might develop into markedly violent contests" and also rejected the Sudeten German party's proposals because

"the constitution [which] did not recognise either a separate legal personality for the different sections of the people or a 'spokesman' for them."[241]

The Czech leadership could only hope that, when they were presenting these or similar utterances to their interlocutors, these would be either too stupid or too biased and overlook the contradictions and hypocrisy of those remarks. How could the rights of the individual be protected or be regarded as such when the State leadership refuses to take into consideration the rights of the people as a whole? It had to be obvious to every foreign

observer – as indeed it was – that the then Czecho-Slovakia was neither a "democracy" nor a "state under the rule of law," but rather a state of several nationalities being forcedly held together by a Czech leadership group, and this state's internal policy had as its *leitmotiv* the battle against all non-Czech nationalities. The British Envoy in Prague, Newton, felt obliged on 19 April 1938 to make the following recommendation:

> "… the first essential would seem to be substitute on each occasion for the expression 'minorities' the expression 'nationalities'; for if there was one thing which roused the ire of the Sudeten Germans to-day, it was the application to them of the term 'minority'….
>
> As a general observation, I would remark to Dr. Benes that he had on various occasions made a public announcement of the new principles by which the administration would be guided in the future and of the spirit in which it would act; his critics had been wont to reply that these were fine words and nothing more."[242]

A few days after his meeting with Benes, Newton added:

> "In using the expression 'United States of Bohemia and Slovakia' I explained I did not wish to raise any question of federation but only to bring out the ideals of union and partnership. M. Benes listened with attention and said that he personally agreed with my remarks. He had long held that Czechoslovakia could not be a national State.... In the Cabinet it was already realised that his programme meant an end of the conception of a national State." [240]

But these too were "fine words and nothing more." After all, "the country was" – to use the words of the Czech Prime Minister Hodza – "too small to allow itself to be 'atomised,'" and that granting autonomy would mean "to commit suicide." [241] Or, to quote the decision taken by the plenum of the supreme administrative court in Prague on 19 March 1919 (3 months before the signing of the Versailles peace dictate): The national minorities might be granted rights only to the degree that thereby "the character of Czecho-Slovakia as a national state" is not undermined[243] Needless to say, this set phrase became the guideline for legislation and government practice

> "not only in Czecho-Slovakia but also in most of the states that had been established or expanded by the peace treaties of 1919-1920." [243]

That Eduard Benes, at that time Czech Foreign Minister, was involved during the years 1918-1921 in the forced transfer of German territory to Poland is mentioned only in passing.[244]

This Benes, having advanced to President in 1935, deemed himself qualified in home affairs on the basis of his strategy in foreign affairs, as described in his memoirs:

> "During all those exacting and exhausting negotiations (from 1935 onwards), I tried my utmost to steer a straight course with the Soviet Union on one side and France on the other. On June 4th, 1936, after the French elections which resulted in the formation of the Government of the Popular

Front, the new Premier, Léon Blum, had sent me a message that France would never again behave with such weakness as his predecessor had done at the time of the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine and assured me that his Government would be strong and firm towards Germany and that we might count on this.

This was really France's last stand. The Foreign Minister, J. Paul-Boncour, sent me a number of messages in the same strain. He tried especially to re-establish the Eastern front of the Little Entente and he also tried to win over Poland."[245]

It is evident that the political and military co-operation between Czecho-Slovakia and a Soviet Union geared for world conquest, with the purchasing of Soviet bombers and the Soviet promise of assistance in spite of the absence of a common frontier, as well the French attempt to open up a route to Prague for the Red Army in the event of war,[246] was to have a disastrous effect on the development in Europe.[247]

"Russia had already delivered three hundred war planes to Czecho-Slovakia, and in addition several squadrons of Soviet planes were on Czechoslovak airfields."[248]

Not Hitler, but Eduard Benes had been aggravating the Sudetenland crisis more and more! The British historian A.J.P. Taylor was to confirm that "In the spring of 1938 Hitler did not see his way clearly," but that Benes was willing to settle his Sudetenland problem – "insoluble at home" – "on the international field."[249] The diplomatic records show that on 12 March 1938 the assurance was given by Göring to the Czechs that "Germany is not considering taking action against Czecho-Slovakia." After the *Anschluss*, Hitler stated that the "solving of the Czecho-Slovak question was not urgent,"[250] and there is no proof that he acted otherwise.

"It is often said that the Nazis deliberately roused up otherwise contented German minorities to imagine their grievances and make political capital for Germany out of them. The impartial investigations of Lord Runciman effectually routed this charge. Hitler had not stirred up discontent in the Sudetenland.[251] On the contrary! German diplomats in Bohemia tried to hold back the Sudeten Germans in the face of any Czech provocation, when the excitement over the union of Austria with Germany was at its peak."[252]

Other politicians, on the other hand, were already examining the Czecho-Slovak question "long before Hitler had formulated his intentions."[253]

"Not only did the British and French urge concessions on the Czechs. The British also urged Hitler (already on 10 May 1938) to make demands. This took him by surprise."[254]

Before the May 1938 crisis, the Reich government had on six occasions endeavoured to negotiate with Benes. He turned down the German negotiators every time.

"He does not even consider it worth the effort to reply to the offer sent to him by telegraph on 16 February 1938 by the German Envoy Eisenlohr."[255]

The May crisis in 1938 was triggered by President Benes with his order for mobilisation of the Czecho-Slovak army. As a pretext he used rumours of alleged concentration of German troops on the Czech border. The sources of these rumours were British news services, "apparently from the Foreign Office."[256] In any case, they were originating from the same capital city whence it had just recently been put to Hitler to make demands in respect to Czecho-Slovakia "which had surprised him very much." Needless to say that these rumours and their consequence in the shape of the Czech mobilisation likewise "surprised" him.

> "In actual fact there was no movement of German troops – as was established beyond a doubt at the Nuremberg trials after the war. What then induced the Czech government to start these clear provocations for war?
>
> There are only two possibilities, the accuracy of which, however, can only be a matter of conjecture for now. Either the Czech government, similar to Schuschnigg with his 'plebiscite,' simply took a leap forward and quite deliberately provoked a war…
>
> There is the other possibility in that German resistance circles learned of the drawing up of the second survey 'Green,' but not the contents. Possibly London was informed of the designing of this study – anti-Nazi circles at the highest military level were in fact giving information of the most secret military nature to the British government – and from that would have drawn the conclusion that the study was a short-term plan of attack.
>
> The British and French press is filled with alarming reports. War seems directly imminent! Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin, advises his civil servants to send their wives and children back home. He makes the same recommendation to the press corps.
>
> The protests continued to pour in – not against the Czech mobilisation, but against the non-existent German troop movements. The governments of France and the Soviet Union openly threaten with military intervention."[257]

In fact, mobilisation in itself already signifies a state of war, even today after the Second World War! Benes was upholding the mobilisation even when the rumours that had been used as a pretext were refuted by (neutral) foreign journalists and military attachés; the reservists would only be demobilised in mid-June 1938. Britain and France, in spite of Hitler's appeals, never advised the Czechs to cancel their mobilisation!

Hitler issued a secret directive on the very first day of the Czech mobilisation, on 21 May 1938, "that it was not his intention to take action against Czecho-Slovakia in the near future."[258] This proves that Hitler did not want to be provoked and, furthermore, was not looking for a convincing pretext, acceptable to world opinion, for crushing Czecho-Slovakia. He could not have wished for a better justification for an attack – had he been out to make conquests – than the premature mobilisation of the opponent, together with the corroboration of the neutral, as well as the British and French, military attachés that the explanation as advanced by Benes was a

fabrication. (Hitler took a similar stance in the face of the renewed Czech mobilisation of 23-24 September 1938.) The chain of evidence continues and stretches as far as the 1945 falsification of the (still to be separately investigated) "Hossbach Memorandum" (pre-dated to 5 November 1937), in which, amongst other things, this sentence was passed off as authentic:

> "Hitler had decided to tackle the solution to the German question of territory and to advance by force against Czecho-Slovakia and Austria at the next available opportunity."

In reality, however, he did *not* take the next available opportunity. Hence no such plan or decision could have existed.

The Czechs, however, were not content with mobilisation only. They were at the same time intensifying their military action against the inhabitants of the border zones and were also escalating their hostile press campaign with the mocking argument that Hitler's restraint and inactivity was to be taken as a sign of weakness. Therefore, as Hitler had apparently already retreated from tiny Czecho-Slovakia, how easy it should be, then, for the Great Powers to finish off the Reich![259] This and more could be thrust at Germany without running any risk whatsoever! The press of the West collaborated and

> "was praising the Czech military machine again and again for the unexpected efficiency and quickness with which it was working. We regained our confidence, seeing that we were not alone."[260]

How provocative the moves were from Eduard Benes would also be evident in the weeks before the Munich conference in that he could not even be persuaded by the pressure exerted by the Western Powers to propose a compromise solution to the Sudeten Germans.[261] The reason for this was that, besides the Western Powers, he could bring yet another "friend" into the game: Stalin.

> "The Soviet government, which had declared itself ready to fulfil its commitments under the Soviet-Czech agreement, confirmed in mid-May 1938 its willingness to defend Czecho-Slovakia against any aggressor, even if France should refuse to help."[262]
>
> "The Soviet government approached the governments of Great Britain and France several times suggesting combined operations in support of Czecho-Slovakia. …
>
> The Soviet Union declared itself ready to intervene on behalf of Czecho-Slovakia, even if France were not to grant her support, which, however, had been a prerequisite for Soviet aid… even if Poland or… Rumania should refuse to allow Soviet troops to pass through their territory. The Soviet government informed the President and the government of Czecho-Slovakia that the Soviet Union would assist Czecho-Slovakia under one condition: when Czecho-Slovakia is willing to defend herself and will ask for Soviet help."[263]

For the rest, this Soviet promise of aid was unconditional, *i.e.* independent of the legal position and of the "question of the aggressor." According to Soviet teaching, everybody is an aggressor anyway who has been labelled as such by the Communists, irrespective of the circumstances. Even the U.S. Ambassador in Paris, Bullitt, seemed to be getting perturbed by the crisis- and war-promoting influence of the Soviet Union on the Czech government. In a letter to President Roosevelt of 22 May 1938 he advised that the general mobilisation ordered by the Czech government

> "has to be understood as provoking war, which could have only one result: establishing Bolshevism on the whole continent." [262]

The Munich conference, which took place four months after these events, could have been avoided, if President Benes had accorded to the German minorities the rights which had already been guaranteed in 1919, and if he had not let himself get carried away in continual provocations in the certitude of enjoying the support of his many powerful and, sometimes, goading "friends."

At that time there were 500,000 Sudeten Germans permanently unemployed, without any support from insurance benefits and without assistance from the trade union or health funds (out of 800,000 unemployed citizens in the whole of Czecho-Slovakia); to those numbers the destitute dependents need to be added. Such a state of affairs could not remain unchanged. In Czecho-Slovakia, payment of unemployment benefits was tied to membership in a trade union and would in this instance still only be paid for six months. The subsequent phase would be social welfare or the relief fund of the community. This would amount to a weekly payment (monthly in the case of money from the relief fund) of 10 Crowns for single people and 20 Crowns (one to two Reichsmark)[264] for married people. This whole picture of misery is enlarged by the consequential result of this situation in the form of malnutrition and disease, a rising death rate and a severe decline in marriages and births. The systematic ousting of the Sudeten Germans from the economy and the administration, even in their exclusively German spheres, remained a political concept, and as such was bound to lead to an aggravation of the situation.

The deeper reason for this misery was the 200 paragraph "Defence of the Realm Act," enacted in Czecho-Slovakia on June 23 June 1936, which, together with its implementation decrees, supplied the "legal basis" for the

complete elimination and weeding out of the Sudeten Germans with their culture and traditions. This law was embarked upon immediately by the newly elected President and thus "Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces," Eduard Benes, upon his election on 18 December 1935, and it remained one of the longest lasting laws. With the aid of ambiguous phraseology concerning "national unreliability," any employee could be dismissed and any employer dispossessed who did not suit the Prague government. Any remaining possibilities left to the Sudeten Germans for eking out a living, which had not been covered by this last regulation, were eliminated by the "borderland" rule.

The refusal to exert any political influence on these entire happenings, the flight of more than 214,000 Sudeten Germans across the border to Germany, the slaying of 200 Sudeten Germans in local pogroms, and much suffering were bound to bring the situation continually to a head even without any influence from Hitler. Every foreign visitor who was traveling in those parts at that time agreed that this state of affairs was intolerable.[265] Lord Runciman, a British government's Special Envoy who stayed in Czecho-Slovakia from 25 July until mid-September 1938 to investigate the situation on the spot was just one amongst many.

The British leadership was being kept very well informed about the conditions in Czecho-Slovakia during all these years, since elected representatives of the Sudeten Germans had been making their plight known to British politicians since 1919.

> "However, it was the German landowners, Democrats and Social-Democrats in Czecho-Slovakia that had been applying for help from the British government in London against Czech oppression in the days before National Socialism. Only later did Henlein and his fellow party members also come to the Thames to make representations for the same reasons. Already in the summer of 1937, Henlein had travelled to London to personally transact independent negotiations on the granting of autonomy for the Sudeten German regions in Czecho-Slovakia; already at that time did the British government – acknowledging the justification of the Sudeten German demands – give Henlein the assurance that it would support his endeavours."[266]

The Sudeten German claim to self-determination and independence, publicly made by Henlein on 15 September 1938, was raised only at the very last,

a. after the rejection of their numerous proposals, very modest in scope, which were brought forward frequently over many years of enduring patience, hence suggesting peaceful intentions;

b. after the announcement of martial law in the Sudeten territory by the Czech government on 12 September 1938;
c. after the British press and Lord Runciman, even Mr. Chamberlain as the Prime Minister and also Winston Churchill, were recommending a cession to Germany.

This is an example written on 14 May 1938 in the *New York Times* by "Augur," a former diplomatic correspondent of the London *Times*:

> "Mr. Chamberlain today… certainly favours a more drastic measure – namely, separation of the German districts from the body of the Czechoslovak Republic and the annexation of them to Germany."[267]

Winston Churchill, in the leading article in *The Times* on 7 September, made it patently obvious

> "that the best way out of the situation would be the transfer of the Sudeten districts by Czecho-Slovakia to Germany."[268]

Of course, after the Munich conference Churchill then referred to it as the "model democratic state of central Europe" – (see the references to his warmongering speeches on pages 62f.)

Lord Runciman, in his report to the British government dated 21 September 1938, unequivocally recommended the transfer of the Sudetenland to Germany,

> "since there exists the danger of a civil war, and the Czech government is in no satisfactory measure prepared to accommodate any concessions."[269]

In spite of these and other attempts at mediation and much good counsel, the Czech government was not willing to give way. Too powerful, after all, proved the influence from Moscow. Benes had received from Stalin once more, in answer to his enquiry, the assurance that the Red Army would be marching in the event of a German-Czech conflict, even if France was not going to intervene militarily and, in fact, irrespective on whatever grounds the conflict would break out.[270] The stipulation for this deployment was merely – as already stated – that the Czech army should be ready for battle and that the help of the Red Army should be requested.

> "For its part, the Government of the USSR was inviting the French Government immediately (at the beginning of September 1938) to arrange a consultation between representatives of the Soviet, French and Czecho-Slovak General Staffs to work out the necessary measures. Litvinov thought Rumania would allow Soviet troops and aircraft transit through its territory, but considered it very desirable, in order to influence Rumania in this sense, to put the question of eventual aid to Czecho-Slovakia before the League of Nations as soon as possible. If there were even a majority in the League Council in favour of such aid (strictly according to the Covenant,

unanimity was required), Rumania would undoubtedly support it and would not object to Soviet forces passing through its territory."[271]

The objective of the Soviet Union must have been obvious to every politician of the Western Powers. After all, Lenin was teaching already in 1917 that the proletarian revolution would increase the differences among the capitalist nations to the point of creating wars and the eventual self-destruction of capitalism, to be followed by the decisive weight of Soviet might tipping the scales in favour of establishing world-wide Bolshevism.

Stalin reinforced his readiness for action and consequently his encouragement for Benes' inflammatory policies with appropriate measures:

"In these past few days the government of the Soviet Union has confirmed again her willingness to help the peoples of Czecho-Slovakia without delay and has approved to this end fitting practical measures. Thirty infantry and several cavalry divisions of the Soviet army have been assembled on the western border of the USSR. The air force and armoured units have been put on stand-by. 'The Soviet armed forces' – as Nikita Khrushchev recalled in 1955 – 'were at that time put on a state of alert in order to check Hitler's aggression directed against Czecho-Slovakia.'" [270]

On 12 September 1938, at the final session of the NSDAP congress in Nuremberg, Hitler stated in greater details his position on the Czech policy and declared that the Reich government was not indifferent to the lack and abolition of the rights of the Sudeten Germans, affirming that no European state had made more sacrifices for the sake of peace than Germany, but that these sacrifices had limits.

The situation on 12 September 1938 was as follows:

"Martial law is imposed on almost all regions of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Czechs adopt still more radical measures: intensifying of press censorship, prohibition of assembly, independent military action and measures taken by local police.

Konrad Henlein issues a six-hour ultimatum to the government that demands the repeal of martial law, the withdrawal of Czech police from the Sudeten German areas, and the billeting of the soldiers in purely military quarters.

After the deadline has passed, the Sudeten German delegation breaks off negotiations with the government and leaves Prague."

On 13 September:

"The Czechs are taking stringent police and military measures and enforce *en masse* a wave of arrests. Some high officials of the Sudeten German party are leaving Czecho-Slovakia.

The Runciman delegation acknowledges that in the present circumstances the demands of the Sudeten German party are understandable and justifiable."

15 September:

"Konrad Henlein releases a proclamation to the Sudeten Germans and to the world in which he demands the joining of the Sudeten territory with the Reich. Formation of a Sudeten German

volunteer corps in Germany."[272]

Prague answered on 16 September by banning and dissolving the Sudeten German Party, thereby depriving 3.5 million Sudeten Germans of every possible democratic and organisational representation. Prague even issued an arrest warrant for the party's former leader Konrad Henlein and disseminated a "wanted" poster for his capture. Furthermore all telephone links with the German Reich were cut.[273] On 17 September a further set of extraordinary measures was added, which abrogated a whole host of constitutional articles. On 19 September London and Paris demanded of Benes in the so-called "Anglo-French plan" the ceding of the Sudetenland (territories with more than 50% German population), and they withdrew their promise of military assistance in case of conflict. On the basis of Lord Runciman's final report, the two Western Powers increased their pressure on Benes on 21 September 1938, informing him

> "that he could no longer count on military assistance in the event of Germany invading Czechoslovak territory."[274]

After that and on the same day, Benes accepted the British-French demands. On the same day Hungary and Poland notified the Czecho-Slovak government of their respective territorial claims, for the cession of the territories populated by Hungarians and Poles.

22 September:

> "The [Czech] government of Milan Hodza resigns. Enormous Czech demonstrations call for the most stringent measures against Sudeten Germans. Arrests [of Germans] on a huge scale follow, prompting a mass exodus from the German border areas to the Reich. The Czech Army General Sirovy is asked by Benes to form a government."[275]

On the same day, Mr. Chamberlain meets Hitler in Bad Godesberg, after firstly having obtained the approval of the British Parliament for the handing over of the Sudetenland to Germany, which had been the subject of discussions during his visit to Berchtesgaden on 15 September. As a result of the changing circumstances happening within a few short days, Hitler found himself compelled having to insist on a short term solution, which would be interpreted abroad by the "fixers of public opinion" – quite uncalled for – as "new demands from Hitler to provocatively aggravate the situation."

At the time of this Godesberg conference, still other forces were exacerbating the situation in Europe. It was mainly Lord Halifax in London

who was providing the new inflammatory material: Already on 22 September he pushed the British delegation by telegraph to giving their approval for advising the Czech government to mobilise. Henderson succeeded in the postponement of this advice. But in spite of this and despite the fact that Halifax was far away from the scene, the British Foreign Minister was urging once more on 23 September: "It is our suggestion to permit the Czech mobilisation as of 3.00 p.m." "You should wait a bit longer," was Henderson's reply. In the meantime, the French Prime Minister Daladier stated also that "the Czech mobilisation must no longer be postponed." At 4.00 p.m. the British delegation in Bad Godesberg yielded to these pressures,[276] although Hitler at this moment was telling Mr. Chamberlain that the Czechs had just then shot 12 German hostages, and he gave him the assurance that he would not be issuing any marching orders to the army during the time of the negotiations.[277] Straight after the go-ahead from the Foreign Office in London, the Czech government announced a general mobilisation, thereby calling to arms 1.5 million soldiers, and the railway traffic to the German Reich was cut for the whole network. Once again the situation changed, that is to say, had become worse, but not because of Hitler. The conference at Bad Godesberg was wrecked by the Czech mobilisation. Again the world press put the responsibility for the "foundering of a peaceful solution" on Hitler. – No mention was made of Halifax busying himself in the background.

Other protagonists are to be mentioned also, namely the Soviets:

> "The Czechoslovak Government rejected Hitler's Godesberg programme (22-23 September 1938). In making up their minds, the Czechoslovaks were influenced a good deal by the assurance received from the Soviet Union a few days before that it was ready to afford Czecho-Slovakia assistance in any conditions, even should France betray her."[278]

On 24 September, alarmed by the turn of events, the British delegation at Bad Godesberg, led by Chamberlain without his Foreign Secretary Halifax, sent a memorandum to Newton, the British Ambassador in Prague:

> "Reports which are increasing in number from hour to hour regarding incidents in the Sudetenland show that the situation has become completely intolerable for the Sudeten German people and, in consequence, a danger to the peace of Europe. It is therefore essential that the separation of the Sudetenland agreed to by Czecho-Slovakia should be effected without any further delay."[279]

On 26 September Hitler made a speech at the Berlin *Sportpalast* in which he said:

"Faced by the declaration of England and of France that they would no longer support Czecho-Slovakia if at last the fate of these [Sudeten German] people was not changed and the areas liberated, Mr. Benes found a way of escape. He conceded that these districts must be surrendered. That was what he stated, but what did he do? He did not surrender the area, but the Germans he now drives out! And that is now the point at which the game comes to an end! No sooner had Mr. Benes spoken when he began his military subjugation afresh – only with still greater violence. We see the appalling figures: on one day 10,000 fugitives, on the next 20,000, a day later already 37,000, again two days later 41,000, then 62,000, then 78,000, now 90,000, 107,000, 137,000 and today 214,000."[280]

On 27 September, President Benes had all radios in the Sudeten areas confiscated and had 20,000 Sudeten Germans arbitrarily arrested and taken hostage, whose execution he had planned in case of conflict.[281] Then the Czechs destroyed 247 bridges in the region.[282] Benes tried to procure binding promises from Britain and France with the help of the intensifying crisis created by his politics and to widen the internal problems of Czecho-Slovakia into a European crisis.[283] He was even willing to unleash a war to obtain his objective. His memoirs – "apparently a section of the memoirs considered as lost"[284] – contain the following appeals, or rather statements:

Eduard Benes' speech made on the radio on 22 September 1938:

"To escape from a war with Germany is impossible. It will either take place now or later. I would wish for it to happen now. The duty of our government is to preserve the state up to the moment when a further crisis involving Germany will happen. This crisis is inevitable; from it a general war will start up that will give us back all that we would be losing now."

On 23 September 1938:

"I convoked the government with representatives of the political parties and the army to the Hradschin and demanded the approval for mobilisation while not hiding from them the fact that in a few days a general war, in which France, Russia and Great Britain were on our side, would break out in Europe....

I was convinced that a general war against Germany had to come."

To his generals he said:

"Prepare for an imminent war; we shall yet have a role in it." [284]

On 2 October 1938 Benes confided to one of his General Staff officers that he had not expected the "weakness and treason of the West."[285]

"In spite of the mobilisation of our whole army, the Munich Agreement… was forced upon us."[286]

He who proclaims continuously the inevitability of a great "general" war – as indeed Eduard Benes had admitted to – is using a conspicuously obvious language. As a prominent politician, he is doing all he can to promote such a development and to worsen the situation. The danger was all the greater, especially since, unfortunately, the Soviet Union with her

world revolutionary designs was also in on it. This language was also heard and understood in Britain and France months before "Munich." It was also known in those countries that Germany had refrained from exerting direct pressure on the Czech government for as long as possible – in spite of the provocative actions of the Czech politicians.[287] It was also known in those countries that Benes considered his army to be the best in Europe and his fortifications equal to the Maginot Line, perhaps even superior to it, and that he, since his election to the presidency on 18 December 1935, had based his policies on the "feeling that Europe was heading toward a vast conflict." Benes admitted:

> "I therefore decided in the first place to redouble our efforts to bring our army to a high pitch of perfection. To this task I dedicated myself with greater energy and devotion than to anything else before.
>
> I was always proud of the fact that in these three years [1936-1938] the Czechoslovak Republic did more in this direction than any other democratic State in Europe and that, when we mobilised in September 1938, the Republic was properly prepared for war – with two exceptions – one of these was in the sphere of civil air-raid defence. The other was the unfinished state of the fortifications on our Southern frontier with Austria.
>
> In so far as its army was concerned, France was better equipped than Great Britain, but in 1938 she also was quite unprepared for sudden war, especially a modern one. Its preparations could not compare with Czecho-Slovakia's. This is surely strange, seeing that France was informed of our arrangements down to the minutest detail by General Faucher, the head of the French military mission in Prague, who every week attended the military conferences with the President of the Republic, and not only knew exactly what we were doing, but *why we* did it [emphasis by Benes]."[288]

In the Western capitals it was well known that the Prague government, prior to the Munich conference, was willing to organise, together with the Soviet Union and the Western Powers, General Staff discussions on a "general" war against Germany. [288] This war was to be started with the expulsion, or possibly the extermination, of the Sudeten Germans. One wondered in London and Paris how it was that, after twenty years of "peaceful" and "democratic" policies, the Czech government still rejected proposals for a plebiscite in Sudetenland. The explanation was simple:

> "A plebiscite would mean disintegration of the State and, as he said more than once, civil war."[289]

No state can rightly claim to build a policy of peace on the oppression of forcibly incorporated minorities and then say that, by granting the right of self-determination to these minorities or by granting of equality in fundamental principles in general, the whole state would disintegrate. It is typical of the "provocative attitude of the Reich government" that the first

calls for a plebiscite in the Sudetenland came from the British press. Only afterwards, and rather late in the day, did the leader of the Sudeten German party, Konrad Henlein, make such a demand.[290] Britain as well as France, but also Mr. Benes, realised full well what the outcome of a plebiscite would be.[291] Therefore they prevented it with the explanation that

> "Hitler must not be given a weapon for the destruction of the Central-East European balance."[292]

Hitler had not demanded the Munich conference in the context of an ultimatum. It had been likewise proposed by other powers and justified on the grounds of a common European interest. In this connection, the role of U.S. President Roosevelt is, more often than not, misjudged. Yet it was he who, on 26 September 1938, was urging Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler and Benes in pertinent communications to call an international conference in order to solve the Sudeten question. Since Roosevelt took many of his decisions in secret, without consultation or counselling from anyone in his Cabinet,[293] and since the U.S. State Department documents on the Munich conference are, to a large extent, still unavailable,[294] one can only guess at Roosevelt's motives.

> "Meanwhile we have some clues, all of which point in the same direction, namely that Mr. Roosevelt did not regard Munich as any final settlement with Hitler but believed that it might lead to war at no distant period. Hence, he continued his plans for a vast armament program, with emphasis on airplanes, which would help to provide Britain and France with the sinews of war and make the United States ready for possible involvement in the impending struggle." [294]

Roosevelt knew, or should have known, what was about to be negotiated at the Munich conference. But in spite of this knowledge he did not encourage Britain and France to support the status quo in Czecho-Slovakia. He favoured the French-British decision for a transfer of the Sudetenland to the German Reich (messages from Roosevelt of 26 September). Shortly after the ratification of this decision (29 September), however, his manoeuvres were such "that Chamberlain was made generally responsible for the whole disgrace." [294] At the same time he encouraged London, Paris, but also Warsaw

> "…to take a stand relative to Germany that was likely, if not sure, to bring war..."[295]

The backdrop to this stand had basically been perceived correctly by the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Jerzy Potocki, even though the threads which Roosevelt had personally woven for the Munich Conference

remained hidden from him. On 12 January 1939, Potocki wrote to the Foreign Minister:

> "I can only add that, as an astute politician and expert on American mentality, he [President Roosevelt] has succeeded in quickly and adroitly diverting public opinion from the true domestic situation [in the U.S.] and interesting that opinion in foreign policy.
>
> The 'modus operandi' was perfectly simple. All Roosevelt had to do was to stage correctly, on the one hand, the menace of world-war brought about by Chancellor Hitler, while on the other hand, a bogey had to be found that would gabble about an attack on the U.S.A. by the totalitarian countries. The Munich Pact was indeed a godsend to President Roosevelt. He lost no opportunity in translating it as France's and England's capitulation to bellicose German militarism. As people say in this country: Hitler drew a gun on Chamberlain. In other words, France and England had no choice and had to conclude a most shameful peace."[296]

Roosevelt's meddling in these European affairs was not done on the basis of being an expert in this particular field of problems, or because he had an understanding of how best to diffuse the crisis, or because he was aiming to ease the tension in Europe. His involvement was rather on the grounds of self-aggrandisement since – far away from the White House – he was hoping to encounter, as indeed he did, situations and people that could assist him "to play a role" in world politics. Eduard Benes, the Czech President of like-minded views, met Roosevelt on this footing.

But France and Britain refused to be drawn into a conflict over Czecho-Slovakia by Benes or Roosevelt. Chamberlain, who liked to call Czecho-Slovakia "a far-away country" and the Czechs "people of whom we know nothing,"

> "believed also that the country 'would not have followed us if we had tried to lead it into war to prevent a minority from obtaining autonomy, or even from choosing to pass under some other government.'"[297]

The actions of the British government before Munich were not dictated by fear of war, but rather because of a "belief that Germany had a moral right to the Sudeten German territories."[298] Chamberlain himself had already stated in May 1938:

> "that not even a victorious peace would restore their [Czech] present frontiers." [297]

The Western Powers induced the Czechs on 19 September 1938 to cede the Sudeten German territories to the Reich. Hitler had neither been consulted about this decision nor about talks with the Prague government. Czecho-Slovakia had already capitulated in the face of the Anglo-French intervention eight days prior to the Munich accords and was not, as it is still commonly depicted to this day, destroyed by "Munich." [298]

"In historical context, it is quite understandable that Benes and Hodza were unwilling to fight to preserve Czecho-Slovakia. Hodza, the former Greater Austrian federalist and collaborator of Franz Ferdinand [von Habsburg], had never really been convinced of the viability of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. Benes became a victim of his own bad conscience. He knew that the territories at stake had been obtained through force and subterfuge... A statesman with an unclouded title to defend would have enjoyed a source of moral courage…and would have stood firm against the Anglo-French urgings – it was nothing more than that." [298]

So it was that Chamberlain and Daladier flew to Munich with precise instructions from their Cabinets and with an agreement already accepted by the Czechs. At Munich it was merely a question of sorting out the agreement. Word for word, this is what the agreement states:

"Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy, taking into consideration the agreement which has been already reached in principle for the cession to Germany of the Sudeten German territory, have agreed on the following terms and conditions governing the said cession and the measures consequent thereon…"[298]

Neville Chamberlain explained in the ensuing, quite extended debates in the House of Commons at the beginning of October 1938:

"We did not go [to Munich] to decide whether the predominantly German areas in the Sudetenland should be passed over to the German Reich. That had been decided already."[299]

The conservative member Raikes stated to the House:

"Do not forget that the Czechs annexed the German areas before the Treaty of Versailles accepted it. Hon. Members talk about time limits, but I would remind the House that it took the Czechs twenty years before rights were conferred on the Sudeten Germans." [299]

Sir H. Croft remarked on the same occasion:

"The Labour Party and the Liberal Party at the time of the [Versailles] treaty were most emphatic against the whole of this patchwork-quilt of Czecho-Slovakia." [299]

The fact that Chamberlain flew to Munich and not Hitler to London cannot be interpreted as a 'dictate' by Hitler. While Hitler was justifiably concerned that hostile demonstrations might ruin the chances of a successful outcome of a conference, so it fitted Chamberlain's policy to come to Germany, as he wrote in a private letter on 13 September 1938:

"Indeed it would not have suited me [if Hitler had come to London], for it would have deprived my coup of much of its dramatic force."[300]

Chamberlain declared in his important speech in Birmingham on 17 March 1939:

"Not one voice of criticism was to be heard when I first announced that I would go to Munich. Everybody applauded that experiment."[301]

During that same speech he added:

"It [the ceding of the Sudetenland to Germany] was something in existence ever since the Treaty of Versailles, a problem that could have been solved long ago if the statesmen of the previous 20 years had only had a more generous, more extensive and more enlightened attitude toward their duties. It had become like a long neglected malady, and a surgical operation was necessary to save the life of the patient." [301]

How does a German historian assess the situation in the relative calm after the Second World War?

"As with the preceding *Anschluss* of Austria to the Reich, so likewise here the question of the German element with their culture and tradition (the Germanness) in East and South East Central Europe, for which a rational solution has never been found, this same unsolved question is playing a part here. It lends to the events in Munich a peculiar double character. It provides Hitler with a morally perfect starting position. The sins and shortcomings of the enforced treaties concluded at Versailles, Saint Germain and the Trianon [Palace], which after the First World War put an end to the state of war but failed to bring about a proper peace, take their revenge in 1938.

When the Habsburg monarchy fell in 1918, the 'provincial governments' of North Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia wanted to unite with the new Austrian Republic, whose government, in its turn, desired unification of the German Reich and German-Austria. None of that happened. What came into being was an economically non-viable German 'rump-Austria,' and on the multi-layered ground of the various nationalities in Bohemia and Moravia an ambitious Czech pseudo-national state was brought into existence. In March 1938 events caught up with Austria, while in September 1938 expiation for old sins befell Czecho-Slovakia."[302]

It seems incredible that from October 1938 onward there appears a persistent fondness for describing the Munich conference as a prime example of the "cynical power politics of dictators in relation to peace-loving and fair-acting democracies." When considering the facts, it is absurd to maintain that Hitler had "taken by surprise" or "humiliated" his opposites during the talks, a claim that in fact was never made by the two Western heads of government themselves. After the signing of the Munich agreement the two Western statesmen were not only wildly acclaimed in Paris and London by the population (as indeed also in Munich), but also the respective parliaments expressed their approval by an overwhelming majority.

Therefore, one cannot assert afterwards, as Chamberlain did on 17 March 1939 at Birmingham, that Hitler had sprung upon the world with the Sudeten question "an unpleasant surprise" which "shocked and affronted public opinion throughout the world."[303] The "offending surprise" is to be charged exclusively to the Versailles "peace politicians," as indeed was confirmed by Chamberlain and Daladier with their signatures in Munich. After all, anything associated with the name "Versailles" after the First World War was far worse than "an offending surprise"! There would not have been a Munich conference, had it not been for the victors' practice of

transgressing against all equality and justice for the past twenty years. The "peaceable methods" of diplomacy had been tried and tested for the resolution of the hair-raising state of affairs in Eastern Europe by the various German politicians for twenty years – all without success. So it is hardly surprising when, after twenty years of German patience, amicably asking and complaining, this attitude was gradually changing in order to finally and successfully deal with these urgent matters of concern.

Without a doubt, the yielding at this late stage was only attained through the notion of an impending war which, however, should not be placed solely on Hitler's shoulders, because the one who was calling for war and who caused the tension to intensify into the threat of war was Eduard Benes! To this should be added certain circles in the "Western democracies" as well as the Soviet leadership!

> "Britain and France announced their mobilisation on the following day [28 September 1938]. War seems imminent. In London air-raid protection measures are being taken. Anti-aircraft squads make their appearance. Tens of thousands of children are immediately evacuated from London. Hospitals are cleared in haste.
>
> In Paris air-raid trenches are being dug, sandbags are piled up in front of shop windows. The trains leaving the city are stormed and are soon overcrowded. The rush of fleeing motor-cars congests the arterial roads. The people are expecting German bombing raids, which had been painted by the newspapers in the most terrible colours over the past few years, at a time when Germany did not even have any bombers. The people are seized with panic."[304]

It is moreover pointless in this case to argue whether the ways and means Germany employed are acceptable or not, when years of patience, yielding and pleading have proved ineffective to protect the rights to existence of millions of people.

> "Does a just claim cease to be just because a man backs it by his resolve and by his sword if need be? Mr. Churchill was never a pacifist; he has always honoured the sword. By what philosophy then does he contend that justice is no longer justice if supported by arms? What about Britain and the Boer War? Churchill had taken part in that war, often praising it. Many would rather argue – and with very much force of argument – that a just claim which the claimant is not ready to back by all his might cannot be so very just after all – or the claimant is a bit of a coward.
>
> …If he was prepared to achieve that justice by armed forces, he was prepared to act in the very way which has not only been accepted, but been applauded by the vast majority of mankind in all ages, and by none more than by our own British race…
>
> …The truth is that Munich made peace by granting Hitler what justice and especially democratic justice demanded. It was a perfectly worthy peace, the sort of peace which, if concluded oftener at similar conferences, would have saved the world infinite pain and sorrow."[305]
>
> "It really is high time, if not already too late, that America stops denying the Munich pact and that she starts rebuking the pacts of Yalta and Potsdam, in which not only entire ethnic communities but at least seven entire states were sold out and in which half of two continents were cynically betrayed."[306]

The Munich agreement had come about according to the rules of international customs and practices. F.D. Roosevelt and his well-known teams in Britain and France and in the United States of America were losing no time in playing to the galleries with the slogan, as coined by Roosevelt, of "the overpowering of the peaceful democracies." Also, already by 3 October 1938, Chamberlain was demanding a British rearmament program in conjunction with a change of policy toward Germany – these were the real "insulting surprises" with those grave consequences. Had Chamberlain not just given Hitler a written assurance that there would be mutual consultation regarding all major political questions?

The Munich agreement as well as the peace-and-friendship declarations "never to go to war with one another again" were signed by Chamberlain in Germany on his third visit. If one contrasts this agreement and the three negotiation reports with Chamberlain's statement after his (first) visit to the Obersalzberg, it is difficult to believe in the candour and the peace-making intentions of the British premier. Chamberlain declared after his arrival in London on 17 September 1938:

> "Hitler was abnormal, unpredictable, surrounded by evil advisers. It was inconceivable to him that a man could remain for long in this state of hysteria. When he was returning to Bad Godesberg, said the British Premier, he was setting out to fight with a wild beast."[307]

According to his biographer, Keith Feiling, Neville Chamberlain regarded war with Germany as "inevitable" already at the time of the Munich accord, and so his policies were geared toward this conflict.[308] An incorrect and war-promoting attitude! Keith Feiling, supported by a whole series of historical evidence, verifies that Neville Chamberlain signed the Munich agreement and the peace-and-friendship declarations only in order to gain time for rearmament. Göring's research department had managed to listen in on and record a long-distance telephone conversation between Chamberlain and Daladier that revealed the same attitude. Therefore, Hitler was informed about this early. What was not known to him, however, was how widespread this view had already become.

Georges Bonnet, the former French Foreign Minister, confirmed in 1961 in a letter to the *New York Times* that France and England in 1938 had concluded the Munich agreement with the German government only to gain time in order to arm themselves against the Reich and to negotiate anti-

German pacts with other nations.[309] Undoubtedly – to repeat Chamberlain's words – "an insulting surprise" for the German signatory to the treaty!

The French Ambassador in Berlin of many years' standing, François-Poncet, declared to the Czech Envoy in Berlin, V. Mastny, straight after the signing of the Munich agreement:

> "Believe me... all this is not final. It is but one moment in a story which has just begun and which will soon bring up the issue again."[310]

On the following day the Czecho-Slovak Ambassador in London remarked:

> "Churchill advises and implores, after deliberations with these people, not to let go of the vital fortifications for at least 48 hours. He is convinced that a huge reaction to the treason perpetrated on us will begin here and then spread."[311]

Irrespective of the attitude of those diplomats, the French National Assembly on 4 October 1938 applauded the Munich accords, avoiding any provocative discussions. In Britain, Lord Halifax declared in the debate on the Munich conference in the House of Lords on 3 October 1938:

> "Great Britain should never fight for a foreign state unless she was in a position to restore its old frontiers after a victorious war."[312]

Winston Churchill, however, understood his statement like this:

> "Hitler should not be allowed to 'get away with it'… [Hitler] had extracted British concessions at pistol point."[313]

To Winston Churchill, Lord Halifax, Duff Cooper, Vansittart, Eden and the others who now were directing British foreign policy often from behind the scenes, the Munich agreement signified that "the whole equilibrium of Europe has been deranged."[314] This impaired balance called for, according to the "law of British foreign policy," an appropriate gear change for the destruction of "the most aggressive tyrant on the European continent." And in their eyes this was not Stalin, but Hitler. Hence, these gears had already been changed before the so-called "Night of Broken Glass" of 9 November 1938![315]

The Polish Ambassador in London, Count Raczynski, portrayed Britain's policy after "Munich" in these words:

> "The situation after Munich is described here as a situation which is neither war nor peace,"[316]

and he remarked on the "phraseology that is regularly fed to the (British) public opinion." [316] This conduct displayed by Great Britain was, keeping to Chamberlain's words, an "insulting surprise" – for Germany!

The Conservative Party of Great Britain in fact did uphold the legal validity and expediency of the Munich agreement right up to the middle of the war.[317] Be that as it may, one cannot rightfully attempt to settle historical facts for good and all, if one's actions are compelled by motives of purely political interest. Neither the Munich treaty nor Hitler's subsequent policies were pushing any one of the neighbouring countries or any other European power toward a military confrontation to the point of becoming unavoidable!

Adolf Hitler commented factually, when addressing the German Reichstag on 28 April 1939, on the policies of the Allies after the Munich conference:

> "If the cry of 'Never another Munich' is raised in the world today, this simply confirms the fact that a peaceful solution of the problem appeared to be the most fatal thing that ever happened in the eyes of those warmongers."

Benes, having returned to Prague after the war and looking down upon the city from his presidential palace, confirmed:

> "Is it not beautiful? The only central European City not destroyed. And all my doing."[318]

Prague – The Reintegration of Bohemia and Moravia

Before tackling this topic, it is worthwhile to remind those little familiar with European history that the region of Bohemia and Moravia had been an integral part of Germany and/or Austria for more than a thousand years before the end of World War I. To underscore this fact, a timeline of this rule is given first before we turn to the issue at hand:

1113 Years of German Rule in Bohemia-Moravia/Czechia

Year(s)	Events
805	Protectorate of Charles the Great, Bohemia-Moravia tributary.
817	Bohemia and Moravia also belong to Louis the German, King of Bavaria.
846	Louis the German appoints Duke Rastislav in Moravia, against whom he has to make war later.
884	Moravian Prince Swatopluk pays homage to Emperor Charles III. After his death the Great-Moravian Empire falls victim to the onslaught from the Magyars.

895	Princes of the Bohemian lines affirm their recent submission to the Empire at the East-Franconian court at Regensburg.
925	King Henry I forces Duke Wencel, of the Przemysl line, to pay homage.
950	King Otto I, Emperor from 962, subjugates Boleslav I, succeeding Wencel. Boleslav acknowledges the overlordship of the Empire which remains undisputed, bar a short break in the 15th/16th century.
1041	King Henry III, Emperor from 1046. Bietislaw I, Duke of Bohemia, receives his dukedom as a German fief. Succeeding Bohemian dukes are loyal to the Empire.
1254-1255	Ottocar II, King of Bohemia (1253-1278), great-grandson of Frederick Barbarossa, pretender to the German throne. Königsberg is named in his honour, as twice he takes part as a confederate of the Teutonic Order in the fight against the Prussians.
1310-1437	Kings of Luxemburg on the throne of Bohemia, beginning with the son of (German) Emperor Henry VII, King John, spouse of the sister of Wencel III.
1346-1378	Emperor Charles IV residing in Prague.
1348	Emperor Charles IV establishes the first German University in Prague.
1378-1400	Eldest son of Charles IV from the House of Luxemburg, Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia -Wencel - German Emperor. After his death 1419 War of the Hussites (1420 -1436) starts. Through marriage his inheritance falls to the Habsburg Albert II of Austria (1438 1439), whose line supersedes the line of the Luxemburg emperors on the German throne. After his death, Hungary and Bohemia are lost to the Habsburg allodium and are, under the sovereign rule of Jagiellon kings, in conflict with Habsburg from 1471-1526.
1526	Death of the (Hungarian) Jagiellon-King Louis II. His sister marries the Habsburg Ferdinand I (from 1556 also German Emperor) and brings him the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary. Thereby is the union of these two empires with the Habsburg monarchy established, lasting until 1918.
1576-1611	Emperor Rudolph II makes Prague the imperial Residence.
1618-1648	The Thirty Years' War. In 1618 Frederick V of the Palatinate is elected as the "Winter King" by the Estates (nobles, clergy, common people). The throwing from the window (defenestration) of the imperial councillors.
1620	Habsburg gains victory at the battle on the White Hill near Prague.
1634	Assassination of Wallenstein at Eger, due to which the German imperial influence gained the upper hand once more.
1648-1918	Reluctant cooperation within the Habsburg monarchy, which holds the German imperial crown up to the year 1806.

Seen from that perspective, reintegrating this part into greater Germany merely 20 years after it had become independent with the aid of Germany's enemies, is not all that much of an outrage as it is usually portrayed nowadays.

The Sequence of Events in 1938/1939

The "brutal violation of little, defenceless Czecho-Slovakia" — a statement that was given as reason for concluding that Hitler had broken his promise and was also in breach of trust – was another example of the falsehood which was unceasingly pounded into the heads of masses outside of Germany by the opinion-makers of the press. Yet the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia into the Reich had equally as little to do with the realisation of territorial claims as it had with a plan of attack, a "plot against peace," or the "creation of a platform for the encirclement of Poland and for a breakthrough to the Black Sea." This action arose from the inevitable consequence and the interplay of various historical, ethnographic, political and military factors.

The disintegration of this artificially created multi-ethnic abomination, joined together in total disregard of historical and national principles, happened without any German assistance and would already have come about in 1918, had not Russia and Germany been utterly and totally destroyed. Who in the world is aware nowadays that there were in existence in Czecho-Slovakia, apart from the different languages of all the minority groups, even *two national anthems*, one for the Czechs and one for the Slovaks? And this fact is just one example of the diverse tension-producing elements in this State. Poland and Hungary were asserting territorial claims, and the Carpatho-Ukrainians in the east-most tip of that country were demanding their independence. Already at Pentecost 1938 (30 May) – months before the new Sudeten solution! – the Slovak People's Party of Hlinka was insisting on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh agreement, on autonomy for the Slovaks.

The Pittsburgh agreement of 31 May 1918 had been negotiated during the First World War by Tomas G. Masaryk, who was to become the first president of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, and a group of Slovakian

emigrants to the United States. It was the *Pittsburgh Post* that announced then to the world the founding of this Czecho-Slovakia.

> "Professor T.G. Masaryk was the only representative of the smallest Czech party – the so-called Progressives – in the Vienna parliament. He was in no way entitled to speak in the name of the Czech nation. During the war his conduct was sharply criticised abroad and in Bohemia...
> The Czech people by no means echoed Masaryk's battle-cry: 'Destroy Austria!' "[319]

The Slovaks for their part were insisting from the beginning that the "Slovakian League in America" did not have the authority to consider themselves as the executor for the Slovak people.[320] At any rate, there is – out of consideration for Woodrow Wilson alone, on whose approval the whole project depended in 1918 – in the agreement an assurance given for a cultural special position for the Slovaks, *i.e.* independence in cultural matters. In addition it was set forth that the elected representatives of the Slovakian people should, within the next ten years at the latest, be given the opportunity to decide for themselves on the future of Slovakia. The Pittsburgh treaty had placed the government, or rather the parliament, of the planned state under the obligation to incorporate this fact in the constitution and to organise the state that was to be established as a federation. Already in 1919 the Pittsburgh agreement was violated when the so-called Revolutionary National Assembly that was not made up of lawfully elected representatives of the people but was rather arbitrarily put together – and where Slovaks were actually represented by Czech delegates – approved a constitution of the Czecho-Slovakian Republic which did not respect fundamental clauses of the Pittsburgh accord. Since the Allied Powers were not lifting a finger for the rights of the Slovaks as laid down in the Pittsburgh agreement, constantly growing tensions, exacerbated by the leadership in Prague, were building up so over the years between the Czechs and the Slovaks.[321]

As all the posited demands made on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh agreement had been denied, all Slovakian members of parliament, with the exception of the Communists and Social Democrats – there was neither pressure nor encouragement from Hitler – were requesting autonomy once again on 6 October 1938. This did not come about, first and foremost, as a reaction to the policies of the German Reich, but rather because of the Pittsburgh agreement and its violation by the Czechs.

For twenty long years the Czechs have flouted their commitments. On the basis of the parliamentary decision of 6 October 1938, the Slovakian politician Dr. Tiso had formed an autonomous Slovakian government in Bratislava on 7 October 1938, which was recognised by the Prague Cabinet, with the Munich accord still fresh in their minds. Immediately afterwards, on 9 October 1938, the Ruthenian ethnic group living in the Carpatho-Ukraine likewise organised in Uzhhorod an autonomous government under Andras Brody, which was also accepted by Prague. The two Prime Ministers of both nationalities were sworn in on the constitution of the State in Prague, having now become a Federal Republic. On 22 November 1938 a formal constitutional amendment in Prague – the Slovak Autonomy Law – came into force. Although its provisions did not satisfy the hopes of the Slovakian people, it was nevertheless a further milestone along the route of an internal political development where sections of the population were agitating for independence.

With the help of this Autonomy Law, a provincial Slovak government was envisaged: It would have administrative and executive powers, *i.e.* a Slovak Diet (parliament) with wide legislative authority, while certain subjects of common interest would be reserved for the central government in Prague. Hitler had initially even encouraged Czech opposition to the impatience of the Slovakian people and also to the Hungarian territorial claims after the Munich conference. For example, he had endeavoured still in February 1939 to impede the Slovakian struggle for independence[322] (There were still 113,000 Germans in Slovakia).[323] Yet Hitler could not resolve the fundamental differences in these two peoples. In the spring of 1939, by invoking the Slovak Autonomy Law, the Slovaks were demanding the right to have a say in the allocation of taxes, the right to self-administration and to be given a voice deciding the leadership of the Czecho-Slovakian armed forces. The Czechs turned down these demands, and the Slovaks remained second class citizens in their own country, although they were now able, in contrast to previous times, to intensify their actions for independence.

While the British Ambassador in Prague, Newton, had already reported on 6 March 1939 that "relations between Czechs and Slovaks are 'heading for a crisis,'"[324] the "Foreign Office Memorandum on the Position of His Majesty's Government in connection with possible Developments of the

Slovak Crisis" of 13 March referred to "The position in Slovakia" as "thoroughly unsatisfactory since Munich." [323] It conveyed the expectation that in view of the German press reports on Czech acts of terrorism Hitler may be marching upon Prague, and it stated in these actual words:

> "Until very recently there were no signs of German intervention on the lines of (b)... [b = deliberate disintegration of the Czechoslovak state by Germany.]
>
> Both the official Czech broadcast and [Czecho-Slovakia's Foreign Minister] Dr. Chvalkowsky maintained that there was no evidence that such propaganda had been inspired from the Reich or by the German minority in Czecho-Slovakia...
>
> The most likely development of the present situation would therefore seem to be a Slovakia either nominally independent or bound by even looser federal ties than at present to Prague and dominated in either event by German influence." [323]

The Prague crisis intensified to such an extent that the British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, recommended, on his own authority, to the Czech Envoy, Mastny, to have their Foreign Minister Chvalkowsky come to Berlin.[325]

> "He [Hitler] acted only when events had already destroyed the settlement of Munich."[326]

There had been no encouragement from Hitler to induce Poland to incorporate the Czech Olsa territory that included the town of Teschen, where large part of the population was German. Furthermore, he had not ordered or advocated provincial parliamentary elections in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, and he certainly did not pre-determine their result: The local population there had voted 98% and 92.4%, respectively, in favour of setting up an autonomous government and against centralism from Prague. Furthermore, it was not Hitler's fault that, after Austria's reunion with Germany and the breaking away of Slovakia, Czechia's remaining borderline to the outside world was reduced to a mere 50 kilometres (31 miles), which in this case was a far from friendly Poland.

Hitler also had *not* summoned the Slovak leader, Prof. Tuka, to Berlin. In fact, Tuka came on his own initiative on 12 February 1939 because, in his words, "continued co-existence with the Czechs had become impossible for the Slovaks." He was laying the destiny of his people into "your hands, my Führer (he addressed Hitler as 'My Führer'); my people await their complete liberation by you."[327] In spite of the request for German protection, Hitler was still refusing, in this month before the crisis, to advocate an independent Slovak state.

> "Hitler answers evasively. On no account does he want to tie himself down, and he fears that an official German intervention in favour of the Slovakians could do harm to the newly reached

German-French agreement.

Hitler… merely assures that he will, if Slovakia should become independent, guarantee the independence that the people want."[328]

Then Prague tried to quell the various separatist movements. On 6 March the Ruthenian provincial government was dissolved improperly, and between 9 and 13 March Slovakian Prime Minister Tiso and two of his staff members were removed from office in an equally unconstitutional manner, followed by the arrest of several Slovakian politicians and the appointment of the Prague puppet government under Sidor. All this happened without any help from Hitler.

"The Czech actions have taken everyone in Germany totally by surprise. Hitler is in Vienna attending the celebration of the anniversary of the *Anschluss*, Göring is on holiday in San Remo….

Hitler's anger at the repeated provocation – for this is how he perceives the Czech conduct – knows no bounds. He immediately orders to prepare for an invasion of Czecho-Slovakia." [328]

If Dr. Tiso, after these events in Slovakia, asked for a consultation with Hitler and if, subsequently, he had the Slovak parliament declare unanimously the independence of Slovakia,[329] then the Reich Chancellor cannot be held responsible for this development. Similarly, there is no ground for assuming that Hitler had caused or requested the declaration of independence of the Ruthenian government in the Carpatho-Ukraine on 14 March 1939 or their appeal for protection by the Reich.[330]

Nor had Hitler advised, much less ordered, the Hungarians to move troops to the Hungaro-Slovakian border as a trigger – so to speak – for further radical changes in that area. When Carpatho-Ukraine declared its independence right after Slovakia, Hungary insisted that Czechia removed its troops from there. Yet instead of answering this request, Czech troops attacked Hungary on March 14, leading to a Hungarian invasion and annexation of the Carpatho-Ukraine.[331] Poland in turn wanted to annex the Czech border region of Ostrava and had already early on concentrated military reinforcement at the border.[332]

This all happened before Germany made any move!

Winston Churchill was to admit that the Hungarian troops advancing into the eastern province of Czecho-Slovakia (Carpatho-Ukraine) were secretly being supported by Poland – not Germany! – and that the Polish Foreign Minister had stated publicly in Warsaw on 14 March 1939,

"that his Government had full sympathy with the aspirations of the Slovaks."[333]

The Polish government was the first to say openly that the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia was inevitable.[334] In stark contrast to Hitler, Colonel Beck, Poland's Foreign Minister, who liked to call Czecho-Slovakia a "temporary arrangement" and "a caricature of a state," set to work after the Munich conference toward achieving the further disintegration of this state, a common Polish-Hungarian frontier and the acquisition of Slovakian areas of territory and of Czech industrial areas by resorting to "extremely strong … pressure," "if necessary, by force."[335+336]

> "Even more so, Poland was of the opinion that Czecho-Slovakia had to disappear in the near future, and she was preparing herself to take a part of the legacy. I for my part spoke with the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Lukasiewicz, on this very subject on 25 May 1938 and requested that he urge his government to put itself willingly on the side of the Great Powers that defended Czecho-Slovakia. Lukasiewicz answered that Czecho-Slovakia was a state arbitrarily composed of numerous minorities decidedly hostile toward one other, a country condemned to death. To try, in spite of all, to preserve it would be a grave error on the part of France and Great Britain."[337]

Already on 21 September 1938, Czech President Eduard Benes had stressed in his response to a British-French suggestion to reorganise Czecho-Slovakia – not being aware of the constitutional amendments toward federal reorganisation of Czecho-Slovakia that were to follow later:

> "In the opinion of the Government, acceptance of a proposal of this kind would be tantamount to acquiescence in the complete mutilation of the State in every respect; from an economic point of view and from that of transport, Czecho-Slovakia would be completely paralysed, and from the strategic point of view she would find herself in an extremely difficult situation; and especially, she would sooner or later fall under the absolute influence of Germany."[338]

No one can seriously maintain that the European countries mainly contributing to the disintegration of Czecho-Slovakia – mainly Hungary and Poland – had been "vassals of Hitler." Winston Churchill was also surprised at the Polish attitude which did not suit his plans:

> "We see them [the Poles] hurrying, while the might of Germany glowered up against them, to grasp their share of the pillage and ruin of Czecho-Slovakia. During the crisis the door was shut in the face of the British and French Ambassadors, who were denied even access to the Foreign Secretary of the Polish State. It is a mystery and tragedy of European history that a people capable of every heroic virtue, gifted, valiant, charming, as individuals, should repeatedly show such inveterate faults in almost every aspect of their governmental life. ...
>
> The Hungarians had also been on the fringe of the Munich discussions. Horthy had visited Germany at the end of August 1938, but Hitler had been very reserved in his attitude."[339]

The Czech order of 23 September 1938 for general mobilisation and the planning – highly dangerous and menacing for Germany – on the part of the Soviet Union and France for a 'mother ship' base, depositing war planes on Czech airfields, were not, on the whole, made inoperative after the Munich

conference.[340] Even Winston Churchill admitted the grotesque size of the Czech army and her absurd stockpiling of ammunition:

> "No doubt they [the Czechs] are only a small democratic State, no doubt they have an army only two or three times as large as ours, no doubt they have a munitions supply only three times as great as that of Italy..." [339+[341]]

For Winston Churchill, this was but harmless number games. But for Germany it was deadly reality. Even more so, as in every looming crisis situation, Czecho-Slovakia and her military ally, mainly the Soviet Union and France, would have formed a common front against Germany. The Soviet–Czecho-Slovak mutual assistance pact of 16 May 1935 was still in force. The Czech General Staff carried on working together with the Red Army. The Skoda works continued supplying their armaments material mainly to the Soviet Union, who, as was generally known, was working toward creating a trouble-spot in Europe, so as to harvest from that scene ample fruit for her expansion into world revolution. While the USSR was already in a position, by using Czech airbases, to move at short notice a considerable troop potential into the German flanks, Prague had since 1919 never considered herself to be a European outpost against Asia, but rather the other way round as an outpost of Asia against Europe.[342] That power that had already been willing during the pre-war years to use armed force against Germany – the Soviet Union[343] – had clearly perceived the strategic position of the Czech territory for Germany and had accommodated it to her strategy:

> "As long as Czecho-Slovakia existed, the hands of Fascist Germany would be tied. Germany could not do anything against Poland or France because the well-armed and well-organised Czecho-Slovakian army was an adversary for Germany that was to be taken seriously."[344]

All these elements mentioned here are useful for explaining, but not for "judging," Hitler's decision to occupy Bohemia and Moravia on 14 and 15 March 1939 respectively and to transform this territory into a German protectorate. Every country rests on its own evaluation and functions in accordance with the requisite necessities for its secure existence. That applies as much to the British, French and Soviet government as it does to the German government. To deny on principle that the Reich government is entitled to judge her own worth, an authority which is derived from her right to existence and the demands of her people for security, would mean that the criteria used by other countries – purely dictated by their interests –

is elevated to a maxim. But in this case, every accusation against the German government – that of a one-sided, biased evaluation – is bound to founder and so make a supranational, objective evaluation and, therefore, administration of justice impossible. Nevertheless, the historian has an obligation to use precisely this kind of overriding, unbiased judgment in an assessment. Only then it is possible to gain insights from history to benefit the future of mankind and to make international law binding and acceptable for all.

After the Munich conference, the Czech general public was not about to appreciably change their hostile views and combative methods with regard to the German minority living in Bohemia and Moravia, but also as regards the Slovaks and the people from Carpatho-Ukraine.

Germany's Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, declared to the Czech Foreign Minister, Chvalkowsky, on 21 January 1939 in Berlin,

> "that the latest tendencies of Czecho-Slovakia, should they continue, would one day have catastrophic consequences. Chvalkowsky replied that the remarks of the Reich Foreign Minister altogether confirmed what he had been telling his government time and again."[345]

Added to this are the effects of the geographical position, of geopolitics. Even Czech politicians had to admit that Czecho-Slovakia could not survive without her "natural frontiers."[346]

Hitler's directives for the Wehrmacht of 21 October 1938 and 17 December 1938 mandated to keep an eye on the eventuality for the "liquidation of the remainder of the Czech state …'should it pursue an anti-German policy,'" were "'measures of precaution, not plans for aggression.'"

> "These directives have often been quoted as proof that Hitler was never sincere in accepting the Munich settlement. The truth is rather that Hitler doubted whether the settlement would work. Though often regarded as politically ignorant, he understood better than other European statesmen the problem of Bohemia; and believed, without sinister intention, that independent Czecho-Slovakia could not survive when deprived of her natural frontiers and with Czech prestige broken. This was not a wish for Czecho-Slovakia's destruction. It was a belief held also by Masaryk and Benes, when they created Czecho-Slovakia in 1918; it was the principle on which Czecho-Slovak independence had rested from first to last."[347]

The groundless British change of course starting in the winter months of 1938/1939 and following in the wake of the U.S. President Roosevelt, and London's efforts to enlist the Soviet Union for the encirclement front against Germany, starting in March 1939 at the latest, were making their effects felt in the Czech region too.

Hitler decided to support the Slovaks rather than the Czechs only after he had learned of the results of Chamberlain's and Halifax's Rome visits in January 1939, that is to say, of the diplomatic activities undertaken on a broad scale against Germany; after he became mindful of the policy of spreading anti-German rumours in order to stir up the public mind; after he found out about the British armament, about the forecast of a German-Polish break-up, after the intimidation of Italy, and in the face of the disdain shown for the German attempts toward peace and after the rejection of his new disarmament proposals.

> "In lead articles that were given a wide spread in the British press the assertion was made that Hitler had broken his promise, made at the Sportpalast in Berlin on 26 September 1938, not to make any further territorial claims in Europe. It was declared that he had not kept his previously given word and, subsequently, he was no longer to be trusted. No mention was made, however, about Chamberlain going back on his word that he had given to Hitler on 30 September 1938, with regard to the British-German friendship declaration, when he was informing Mussolini during the period of 11 and 14 January 1939 that he was considering using military action against Hitler – weeks before Hitler took any steps against Czecho-Slovakia."[348]

In spite of this British activity immediately after "Munich," matters might still have developed differently, had not the Czechs continued oppressing their minorities in the accustomed manner as practiced since 1919, and had the Poles not caused a change in conditions by delivering one ultimatum after another to Prague. As long as they had *not* declared their independence, the Slovaks could not expect any effective protection from Germany either, and so they rushed their independence. Tiso, the Prime Minister of the autonomous Slovakian government, opined that Slovak independence could only be guaranteed, if the unwarranted territorial and political demands of the Poles, Hungarians and Czechs could be opposed effectively.

The "no" of the Polish government in reply to the German negotiation proposals regarding Danzig and the Corridor through West Prussia also accelerated events in Czecho-Slovakia, if indeed it did not trigger them.[349] From January, February and March of 1939 onward the Polish "no" to any German offer was becoming ever more determined, and it was accompanied by the combined actions of Polish mobilisation against Germany and of an increased oppression of the German minority – in the Olsa region already since October 1938 – as well as ever more unrestrained journalistic endeavours.

The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, declared on the morning of 16 March 1939 in the House of Commons:

> "With that [the breaking up of Czecho-Slovakia from the inside], a situation has ceased to exist which His Majesty's government has always regarded as temporary."[350]

With that statement, Chamberlain confirmed that since the Munich conference the British leadership had also rated as very low the chances of longevity for the remainder of the Czecho-Slovak State. There is no evidence that Hitler had prepared this march on Prague with long-term and precise planning, which might possibly have warranted the British steps taken since October 1938. The Czecho-Slovak Foreign Minister Chvalkowsky stated in a document of 21 January 1939 that was accepted by the Military Tribunal in Nuremberg 1945-1946

> "that he that he had strictly fulfilled the promise made to him [Hitler] on 14 October although this had cost him a very great deal of trouble."[351]

After all, it goes without saying that in 1939 this hotbed of unrest called Czecho-Slovakia could easily have sparked off a war, had Hitler not intervened. In any case, by re-arranging affairs as they then unfolded, the shedding of blood in the heartland of Europe, which might not have remained limited to local areas only, was averted.

There is plentiful evidence showing that the Czecho-Slovak state, especially while continuing its oppressive, confrontational policy, was unable to exist in the long run after the separation of the Sudetenland. President Benes told the French and the British Ambassador on 19 September 1938:

> "The Anglo-French plan of 19 September 1938 [cession of territories with more than 50% German population] signifies the crippling of the state, economic paralysis, strategically the handing over to Germany and complete subjugation to Germany in the near future."[352]

British and French documents, also recognised as genuine by the IMT, also make it clear:

> "In Slovakia the long-anticipated crisis came on 10 March [1939]."[353]

Only after the unconstitutional dismissal of the Slovakian ministers, that is, after a crisis triggered by Prague, do references appear in the documents to a German action – reaction, in this case, would be more appropriate – but not before that. This irrespective of the fact, though, that the Slovak independence leader, Prof. Tuka, had turned to Hitler already in February 1939 with the appeal for the liberation of his country from Czech rule.

Winston Churchill stated after the re-integration of the Sudetenland into Germany:

> "I venture to think that in future the Czechoslovak State cannot be maintained as an independent entity…
>
> Perhaps they [Czecho-Slovakia] may join it [the Nazi regime] in despair or in revenge."[354]

The territorial demands of Poland and Hungary and the efforts by the Slovaks and Carpatho-Ukrainians to attain independence marked the start of the realisation of the Churchill forecast. The state dissolved in such a way that Neville Chamberlain, on 14 March 1939 – one day *before* the German march on Prague – could state in the House of Commons that no unprovoked aggression on Czecho-Slovakia had taken place by Germany.[355]

> "Chamberlain, as well as Sir John Simon, stated that the Slovakian and Ruthenian independence movements, which they had no intention of weakening or suppressing, signalled the demise of the Czech state. Consequently, protection of the Czech borders had become unnecessary."[356]

The British Ambassador in Berlin, Neville Henderson, who was in favour of appeasement and, because of that, had been put under considerable pressure in Britain after the outbreak of war, wrote about this in his memoirs, published in London in 1941:

> "Unfortunately the Czechs were incredibly short-sighted: they were domineering in their treatment of the Slovaks, and the separatists among the latter were no less blindly disloyal in their attitude towards the Czechs. It was obvious that the controversy which had arisen between them was exposing both equally to German influence, and during the week which preceded the occupation of Prague I did my utmost to persuade the Czech Minister at Berlin to use all his influence with his Government to induce it to lose no time in settling its dispute with the Slovaks and in withdrawing its troops from Bratislava before it was too late....
>
> My warnings to M. Mastny that his Government was playing Hitler's game for him and that its folly would end in disaster either fell on deaf ears or he himself failed to impress Prague. The Czech Government persisted in its obstinacy..."[357]

The Czech President, Dr. Hacha, travelled to Berlin on 14 March 1939 – of his own free will and at his own request.

> "The break away by Slovakia and Ruthenia was to lead to a grave crisis in Prague, and Sir Basil Newton, the British Envoy in Czecho-Slovakia, advised President Hacha that it would be best to travel to Berlin to discuss the situation with Hitler."[358]

In any case, it was not Hitler who "brought things to a head."[359] With prior approval from his Cabinet, Dr. Hacha set out for his journey to Berlin in order to avert chaos from breaking out in Bohemia and Moravia, which was threatening to erupt unless the Reich government intervened, following the declaration of independence by the Slovakian parliament on 14 March

1939. Dr. Hacha, who had been forbidden to make the journey by air because of his heart trouble and thus had left Prague by special train,[360]

> "was received with full military honours due to a visiting head of state: The guard of honour was presenting arms at the station to the sound of the Czech and German national anthems ringing out. At the Reichskanzlei (Reich Chancellery) the 'Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler' (special body-guard for the Führer) stands to attention, the band of the 'Leibstandarte' is playing the Präsentiermarsch, while Dr. Hacha inspects the guard of honour."[361]

Already on the way from the station to his quarters at the Hotel Adlon, Dr. Hacha was telling State Secretary Meissner 'in excited tones,'

> "that he had, in view of the now intolerable situation in his country, come to the decision to ask the Führer and Chancellor of the Reich for help and protection, and he was hoping that he might find him willing to establish a common political ground."[362]

There is no international principle which entitles foreign governments to scream bloody murder when a freely elected and confirmed president, who is congratulated by his predecessor, Eduard Benes,[363] voluntarily transfers the sovereignty of his state to a superior power, as his country is in a hopeless situation. Although much tragedy and explosive material might be embodied in such an act as Dr. Hacha's, there are often varied factors that cannot be put down to the "malicious" intention of one solitary man which make it necessary every now and then to have to take decisions of this magnitude. Deserted by the minorities (even without the Sudeten Germans there still remained 3.5 million non-Czech people in a state of 7 million Czechs), as well as by her big friends Britain, France and the USSR, threatened by Hungary and Poland, economically without protection and militarily helpless, Prague was no longer in control of the situation.

Dr. Hacha, until recently president of the administrative law court in Czecho-Slovakia, the highest in the land, was elected President of the State not by Hitler or his 'odd-job-men,' but by the representatives of the Czech people. That fact ought to be kept well in mind when reviewing the protocols of the meeting between Hitler and Dr. Hacha of 14 March 1939 in Berlin, a document authenticated by the IMT. Typical for the historical analysis of this document is the fact that Dr. Hacha's introductory monologue, which was given without any pressure, with no interruption, without any prior knowledge of Hitler's plans at the beginning of the discussion with Hitler, is mostly only published in excerpts. The British *Documents on International Affairs* verify:

"By accepting it [the post of President], the most difficult task of his life had fallen on him, and, therefore, he had dared to ask the Führer to receive him.

He was convinced that the fate of Czecho-Slovakia lay in the hands of the Führer, and he believed that her fate was safe in the Führer's hands. He had no grounds for complaint over what had happened in Slovakia recently. He had been convinced for a long time that it was impossible for the various peoples to live together in this one body politic. Although their languages resembled each other to a considerable extent, they had developed along very different lines. Czechia was more closely related to Germany than to Slovakia, which showed a stronger inclination toward the Magyars. The Czechs had maintained relations only with the Protestant Slovaks, while the Catholic Slovaks had been rejected by the Czechs… He was not alone with this view, but was sure that eighty per cent of the population shared it with him..."[364]

For instance, the editors of the *Documents on International Affairs* "forgot" to print the following passage of the speech:

"For a long time he had wanted to make the acquaintance of the man whose wonderful ideas he had often read about and followed with interest..."[365]

They did, however, manage to leave in:

"Moreover, the whole regime [Masaryk-Benes] was alien to him, so alien that immediately after the change of regime he had asked himself whether it was fortunate for Czecho-Slovakia to be an independent state at all….

Those were the reasons why they had never been able to arrive at a satisfactory understanding, and he was glad that developments had taken this course…

He thought that the Führer's experience with the Slovaks would be none too good...

Besides, he was not shedding any tears over Slovakia." [365]

That Dr. Hacha was not alone in his opinion is proven by the following facts:

a. His election; because this opinion of his had not just now taken shape while in Berlin "under the influence of drugs." It is remarkable that Krulis Randa, also a candidate in the presidential election, was to be of the same opinion as Dr. Hacha.[366]
b. His request for talks in Berlin with an already preconceived objective in mind, by his radio speech on the previous day (14 March) in which he had been announcing further internal reforms with clarifying comments and by his unimpeded departure from Prague with his Foreign Minister.
c. The telephone discussion with the Cabinet members in Prague immediately before signing the agreement with Hitler and the transmitted consent from Prague.
d. The complete absence of Czech resistance to the entry of German forces, in spite of the Czech army having been mobilised and their considerable stocks of weaponry.

Dr. Hacha's decision to agree to the transformation of his state into a German protectorate was significantly influenced – quite apart from the purely internal strife – by an advancing Hungarian army that was, on the eve of 14 March, taking over and high-handedly claiming a border strip, but also the fact that a *blitzkrieg* by Poland was feared.

These internal and external political connections, which were giving out obvious signals already at the time of the Munich conference that changes – quite specific changes – were becoming apparent for the coming months and years ahead, were the sole reason why at Munich there was not made any guarantee for the preservation of the remainder of the Czech State, although originally this had been on the agenda. This international guarantee was to have been made dependent on the Czech's government ability to satisfy the demands of the remaining minorities.

> "We had no treaty obligations to Czecho-Slovakia. We had never guar-anteed their security."[367]

The fact that, after the Munich conference, the Hungarian government as well as Dr. Tiso for the Slovaks and Dr. Hacha for the Czechs had consulted Hitler and Mussolini rather than the four Great Powers of Munich in order to have the Hungarian territorial claims adjudicated by an impartial arbiter, cannot be laid to Hitler's charge. During the negotiations, resulting in the "Vienna arbitration award" of 2 November 1938, Germany was lending her decisive support to the Czechs, which is all the more remarkable as the Czechs had been living for two full decades – in fact, right up to the time of the recent arrangement – at daggers drawn with the Reich, while the Reich, on the other hand, was allied in friendship with Hungary. This Vienna arbitral award is furthermore additional proof that Hitler had not been making long-term plans, or that he had "intended" anyway to smash or eliminate Czecho-Slovakia. If that had been the objective, then there would not have been a more favourable opportunity than when he was presented with this request at the conference in Vienna.

That Hitler, in view of Dr. Hacha's voluntary Berlin visit, intervened actively in these changes that were taking place in the Czech sphere, one may find regrettable. To pass judgment on this in the name of humanitarianism, of peace and in the name of a generally binding system of values arising from occidental ethics, could prove extremely difficult. Those Powers, however, who considered it appropriate to compel 3.5

million Germans against their will to have to live within a state of 7 million Czechs, and who themselves had appropriated, with varying degrees of violence, colonial territories and protectorates all over the world with the intention of keeping them forever, are then most emphatically *not* in a position to protest, when later on the Czech government felt induced to endorse the policy of becoming integrated into a federation with 75 million Germans, while retaining their cultural and economic autonomy. If Hitler had remained inactive, then his passivity would have made a peaceable impression, but the results would probably have proved disastrous for peace in this area and for the security of the Reich, because other powers would have exploited these changes and, without question, would have increased the belligerent atmosphere in Europe – in fact, against the intention of the Czech government.

The Czech national identity was not in any way demeaned by the Reich, and cultural autonomy as well as economic prosperity was ensured before and throughout the war. No Czech was conscripted for military service, and the entry and settlement in Bohemia required a special permit. Thus did Hitler "violate" a country that had been part of the First German Reich for 1,000 years, where in the centre was to be found the oldest and one of the most outstanding German universities, yes, whose capital city Prague had been, for more than fifty years during the Middle Ages, the capital of that First German Reich. What the Czechs had never granted the Sudeten Germans – autonomy, being in charge of their own national, cultural and economic life and exemption from military service – this was granted by Hitler to the protectorate.

Those who find it difficult to deliberate in a European context when considering Czecho-Slovakia, who might believe that it matters not whether in this instance all historical connections and developments are disregarded, those who impute all and everything to brutal, imperialistic power politics of the German Reich and of the German men and women and whose attitudes are ossified in the short-sighted dogmas of Versailles (Czecho-Slovakia, as is known, not having existed before), ought to make a comparison with the events in Hungary in October/November 1956. Perhaps, belatedly, it will then become more evident and will be appreciated more fully what it means to master a situation, badly managed by others, without the shedding of blood.

"It would be instructive to compare Hitler's generous policies of 1939 with the manner in which the Czechs acted when their country was handed back to them after the defeat of Hitler. Their barbaric actions against the Germans were worse than those of the Russian conquerors. When driving the Germans from the country, the Lidice tragedy was repeated a hundred times over. In many cases the terrified Germans threw themselves at the mercy of the Russians, hoping for protection from murderous Czech mobs. The Czechs even murdered their own statesmen of the year 1939, who had done their best to serve the country bravely and loyally. Chvalkowsky was shot without any further ado, and Hacha died in prison as the result of terrible torture and other maltreatment."[368]

"It has to be emphasised that Hitler did not annex Bohemia and Moravia. He only established a protectorate, where a large degree of autonomy was retained by the people living in that area, especially in all internal local affairs." [368+[369]]

"No one who values honest history can pretend that Hitler was an aggressor who, by brute force, seized that Republic. The two parts of the distracted and feud-riven state both begged Hitler for protection, one against the other. You cannot have protection without a protector…

The Czechs were not so keen, perhaps, as the Slovaks for Hitler's protection, but their President's decision was final, and there never has emerged any proof that it was in any way a forced one, as Hitler's enemies aver; moreover, not one hand was raised, not one gun fired against the so-called aggressor and invader. Does that not seem strange in a people who were attacked and subjected? Not one appeal was made to any other greater power for help against the German enemy. Does that suggest an enemy at all?" [369]

While evoking the right of self-determination, Britain never did venture to attempt to put Danzig on a par with Prague, *i.e.* to propose to Hitler that he would get Danzig because it is German, and in return for that he has to release Bohemia and Moravia back to full independence because it is Czech. Such a conjoined operation would undoubtedly have required that Great Britain would have had to enforced a new government for the Czechs, since the former legitimate Czech government had given their consent to the revised version of 15 March 1939. But if we disregard this inevitable and superficial intervention into the Czech right of self-determination, an attempt such as this would have considerably enhanced Britain's moral reputation. London would thus have demonstrated that its claimed fidelity to a high moral principle is followed by a constructively peaceable foreign policy based on that principle.

In April 1939 the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Gafencu, continuing on to London after first visiting Berlin, hinted to Lord Halifax that such a proposal from Britain might not necessarily have to meet with resistance in Berlin. But Halifax did not react to that.[370] Obviously, Britain was either hardly interest in the Czech question, as she was after the Munich conference from October 1938 onward, or she was interested only insofar as Hitler's march to Prague could be utilised for war propaganda. Since Great Britain, in her propaganda, in her later decisions for war and its

extension was referring to the “Prague” case with emphatic regularity, it seems likely that the second alternative would express the British attitude more accurately. The British government preferred to spotlight the catch phrase of the “violated” Czechs in order to increase their coalition contingent against Hitler, rather than to make the constructive endeavour to re-establish Czech independence.

The British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, tried once more, on 16 August 1939 in a letter to Mr. Strang, the head of the Foreign Office’s central department, to generate an action in connection with this question:

> “Hitler’s remark that the Protectorate is a necessity *for the moment* [Henderson’s emphasis] may be worth remembering. I have some reason to believe that he is not satisfied with the solution of March 15 and realises that he made a mistake. Bohemia might in the end be a question of a formula, as the head of the S.A. said to me. It could be anything, so long as it is not reconverted into ‘a bastion against Germany’ and a bridgehead for an attack on Germany.”[371]

But the British government did not react to this.

Poland Wants War

German Territories in Polish Hands

After the First World War, the "Right of Self-Determination of Nations," as a new principle of international law, was meant to inaugurate an era of peace. Accordingly, U.S. President W. Wilson tried to draw the borders in Eastern Europe along ethnographic lines, respecting the principle of majority. Although wanting to secure access to the Baltic Sea for Poland, his understanding of the term, however, was to declare the Vistula (Weichsel) international and Danzig as a free port.[372] But Poland, which had only been re-established in 1916 as a state with German assistance, was not going to wait for the outcome of the Versailles Peace conference that was stretching over many months and instead used the armistice to militarily occupy the Posen region and parts of western Prussia.

Wilson, who evidently had no understanding of the political and historical situation of Eastern Europe,[373] would be hoodwinked, in the end, not only by the three leading Polish agitators Sosnowski, Dmowski and Paderewski, but also by the French, who were using falsified maps and faked statistics as well as drawing attention to the Polish electoral votes in the USA.[374] The Versailles Peace conference accepted the Polish *fait accompli* with the stipulation, however, that the transfer of territory was made dependent on the Polish obligation of having to guarantee to the German and Jewish minorities far-reaching independence and the preservation of their national culture and traditional way of life. Irrespective of the Versailles border ruling, the Poles still occupied the eastern bank of the Vistula as well as other districts of West Prussia, thus denying all Germans access to this river.

France, that which was to occupy a dominant position in European politics after the First World War and was to favour an eastern buffer against Germany "for security reasons,"[375] was lending her support to the Polish rebels' campaigns of terror against the population in eastern Upper Silesia, as well as to the manipulations of constituencies taking place. Ultimately, this rich industrial area was handed over to Poland despite the Germans winning the plebiscite in 1921. In this way Poland acquired

wrongfully a German territory of 46,150 square kilometres that was populated in the majority by Germans. That Versailles "peace treaty," which was "another way of continuing the war,"[376] "a potential declaration of war" that could "become an even greater evil for the whole world than the war itself,"[377] gave more to Poland than was deserved and much more than she should have claimed. Not only historians from abroad but statesmen of that period, yes, even Polish politicians did not grow tired of pointing to the injustice hereby created and to the seedling of a new war hereby planted.

Marshal Pilsudski's famous remark:

> "So you are lusting after Upper Silesia? But really Upper Silesia is an age-old Prussian colony!"[378]

Indeed they were desirous of Upper Silesia. Many years of groundwork had been put in by Polish agitators in Britain, and in the USA with more success. Thus Sosnowski, in a letter to President Wilson dated 7 April 1917, was demanding Upper Silesia on the grounds that it was especially the coal mining and steel industry of that area, with all the related by-products, which had created the power base of Prussian militarism, and that this threat needed to be eliminated.[379] That there was the additional request in that program for the destruction of Prussia, the dismemberment of Germany and the outrageous lie of "restitution of the coastal territories stolen from Poland" (pronounced East Prussia, which had never been Polish), should be mentioned in passing. [379] Underlying Dmowski's agitating was the belief that "only a total remodelling of the European structure of states" could restore the balance "which has been destroyed by German expansionism," and that Poland would have to become the focus of the non-German Central Europe. The prerequisite was for Poland to be economically and politically strong, and that goal made her possessing Upper Silesia, among other things, a necessity.[380] The same "statesmen" were now the new masters of Poland who had described the partitioning of their country 150 years earlier between Russia, Austria and Prussia (by far the largest part went to Russia) as one of the biggest criminal acts in the history of the world, but who in turn were elevating just such dividing-up and destruction of their neighbour to the West (Germany) into one of the most important principles of their own governing system. It goes without saying that they knew that the "western borders of Poland were a gift of the coalition,"[381] as Pilsudski hat

stated publicly stated on 5 February 1919. But this knowledge was never to be reflected in their policies.

Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, stated during the Paris negotiations:

> "I tell you once more, we would never have thought of giving to Poland a province that had not been Polish for the last 900 years…
>
> The proposal of the Polish Commission that we should place 2,100,000 Germans under the control of a people which is of a different religion and which has never proved its capacity for stable self-government throughout its history, must, in my judgment, lead sooner or later to a new war in the East of Europe..."[382]
>
> "France is not so much concerned with what is important to Poland, rather the French position is determined solely by the aim of weakening Germany."[383]
>
> "To surround Germany with small states, many of which are composed of peoples that have never governed themselves and that comprise large numbers of Germans who are demanding reunion with their homeland, such plans would be, it seems to me, a breeding ground for the most terrible reason for a future war."[384]
>
> "I was as sincere an advocate of Polish independence as any member of the Commission, but I was convinced that to add to Poland populations which would be an alien and hostile element inside its boundaries would be a source of permanent weakness and danger and not of strength to this resurrected State. I knew that a time would come when Germany would respond to the cry of its exiled people and restore them to the Fatherland by force of arms.
>
> For that reason I renewed my pressure in the conference to reject the recommendations which incorporated in Poland towns and territories which were overwhelmingly German by language, race and inclination..."[385]

Woodrow Wilson's words of 7 April 1919 also went unheeded:

> "France's only real interest in Poland was to weaken Germany by giving the Poles areas to which they had no claim."[386]

U.S. Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, remarked on 8 May 1919:

> "Do examine the treaty and you will find that whole populations, against their will, were delivered into the power of those who hated them, while their economic resources were snatched away and handed over to others. The result of such directives has to be hatred and bitterness, if not despair. It may take years until these oppressed nations are able to shake off the yoke, but as sure as night follows day, the time will come when they will try to break free.
>
> We have a peace-treaty, but it will not bring lasting peace, as it was founded on the quicksand of selfishness."[387]

The former British Ambassador in Berlin, D'Abernon, said on 23 January 1926:

> "The Polish Corridor remains the great powder keg of Europe!" [387]

Even the Soviet press supported at that time the German demands for a revision. [387] The French Professor of Slavonic studies, René Martel, opined in 1929:

> "Amongst the thorny questions that have troubled us since the war, none is as regrettable and terrible as that of the eastern borders of Germany. There is not one person nowadays that does not know this truth."[388]

Not a single one of the many Weimar cabinets, not one single German politician of any party had recognised this border ruling. On the contrary, all parties and governments of the Weimar Republic demanded a revision of the eastern border and were unanimous in rejecting an "Eastern Locarno." Reich Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann might be speaking for all of them:

> "One of my most important tasks is the rectification of the eastern borders: the recovery of Danzig, the Polish Corridor and the re-adjustment of the border in Upper Silesia."[389]
>
> "That we do not recognise the eastern borders is a fact I had once expressed in a public speech to the foreign affairs committee, much to the chagrin of the Polish government, when I stated that no German government, from the German Nationalists to the Communists, would ever accept these borders laid down by the Versailles Treaty."[390]

In a memorandum of 1925:

> "The creation of a state whose political borders encompass all German elements who are living inside the enclosed German settlement areas in Central Europe and who want union with the Reich, is the distant object of German hopes; the step-by-step revision of the politically and economically untenable border settings imposed by the Peace Diktat (Polish Corridor and Eastern Upper Silesia), is the next clear objective of German foreign politics."[391]

From the German reply, dated 11 July 1930, to the French proposal for the establishment of a European federal and security ruling:

> "No other country experiences the shortcomings of the European structure more keenly than Germany, which, being situated in the middle of the continent, is particularly badly affected by these deficiencies and repercussions. Therefore, the German government is willing to participate in the League of Nations so as to work for the removal of these flaws. But the ultimate aim of these endeavours would necessarily mean, in a spirit of understanding, to focus on boldly reforming the acknowledgedly untenable circumstances, and so to effect a true appeasement of Europe, one which can be founded only on the principles of justness and equality."[392]

Prime Minister Otto Braun (SPD) in Königsberg, November 1930:

> "I do not contest Poland's need of access to the sea, but just as such access has been secured for the new Czech state using the Elbe and Hamburg, it could have been opened for Poland using the Vistula and Danzig without separating East Prussia from the mother country, as well as placing hundreds of thousands of our fellow Germans, without asking their opinion, under foreign sovereignty, where they now live in a climate of terror, or are even forced out of their land. This injustice never could be or would be accepted by Germany as being justified." [392]

The Labour Speakers' Handbook (1922/1923) remarks under the heading "Poland":

> "Nearly all West Prussia has been annexed to Poland, although two thirds of the people are German and all the civilisation of the country has been due to Germany. A plebiscite was not allowed; if it had been, it would have gone overwhelmingly in favour of Germany… The whole of the province of Posen has been annexed to Poland, although in the Western part there is a German majority.... The policy of Labour is to rectify these unjust territorial arrangements…"[393]

A Catholic German encyclopaedia wrote in the year 1931:

"The creation of the Corridor took place despite the fact that in the past the land had never been historically linked to Poland and was not 'inhabited by an indisputably Polish population,' as Wilson's formula would have required. From a strictly political point of view of power politics, it is a punitive measure aimed at weakening Germany and, at the same time, from a military standpoint, it creates a flank position for East Prussia, whose acquisition has been openly demanded by leading Polish politicians [Dmowski, Grabski, Srokowski] since 1918 as the last goal to be achieved.

By comparison, the necessity of a free and secure outlet to the sea was only a pretext, since that economic need... could have been satisfied by neutralising the lower reaches of the Vistula, creating a free port at Danzig and granting Poland privileged use of the railway lines leading to the sea. Switzerland, Luxembourg, Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia all stand to prove that neither the existence nor the sovereignty of a state depends on the possession of territorial access to the sea....

Indeed, the Polish Corridor is creating a state of unrest and insecurity in political and economic terms simply by being there and is preventing the fruitful co-operation, in the interest of both nations, of Germany with Poland.

The speedy elimination of the Corridor is an essential factor for the appeasement of the whole of Europe."[394]

Winston Churchill was no less astute in identifying the legal position in Posen-West Prussia and, in the interests of peace, was demanding a rearrangement. In the House of Commons on 24 November 1932:

"If the British government is really interested in promoting peace, then the government should assume the lead and re-open the question of Danzig and the Corridor, while the victorious states are still superior. If these questions are not solved, then there is no hope of a lasting peace."[395]

Chamberlain's biographer, Keith Feiling:

"'...to adjust this defiance of history and reason' [the Danzig-Corridor problem], said Churchill in 1933, must be 'one of the greatest practical objectives of European peace-seeking diplomacy.'"[396]

Carl J. Burckhardt, High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, informed the German government representatives on 21 May 1938 that a few days earlier "Lord Halifax had termed Danzig and the Corridor an absurdity," and probably the most foolish provision of the Versailles settlement.[397]

A few days later, on 26 May 1938, the French Ambassador in Berlin, Robert Coulondre, in a talk with his Polish colleague in Moscow, Count Grzybowski, stressed the following:

"Do you not believe that the Polish Corridor has created an anomalous if not artificial situation in Eastern Europe? If you have any doubts, then listen to what foreigners who have been through the Corridor have to say about it."[398]

How much the drawing-up of the border at Versailles had destroyed the international moral code was made clear by the British historian Russell Grenfell:

> "First of all, was there anything essentially wicked in Hitler's desire to retake the Polish Corridor? [This reclaiming was not even on the agenda before the war – the author] If there was, the wickedness was no greater than France's relentless ambition from 1870 to 1918 to recover Alsace and Lorraine. Alsace and Lorraine were much more German than French, although before 1870 they had been part of France for 220 and 100 years respectively. But in the same way the Polish Corridor had been German territory for the best part of a century and a half; it contained many Germans as well as Poles, and its reversion to the recreated Poland in 1919 separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany and involved the isolation and semi-ruin of the important and wholly German city of Danzig. Germany obviously had as good a claim to the Corridor as France had to Alsace and Lorraine. And since the victors at Versailles, who included both the British and the French, had recognized this right of prior possession in France's favour in regard to the two provinces, their charge of criminal aggression against Germany – and certain German individuals – for applying the same type of claim to the Polish Corridor was plainly hypocritical."[399]

In the case of Alsace-Lorraine it is a question, furthermore, of a peripheral zone with a border not even half the length of the East German one. The frontiers in Eastern Germany were not only arbitrarily and forcibly shifted in a westward direction, but their length thereby became grotesquely stretched, so that a part of Germany (East Prussia) was detached from the rest of the Reich. With these losses, Germany lost 10% of her total territory. A tightly knit-together settlement area, bonded through economic and cultural ties, was torn apart. The former High Commissioner of the League in Danzig was to write about this in 1960:

> "Rightly so did the French Ambassador in Berlin, Coulondre, record in his memoirs that the German people had come to terms with the return of Alsace to France, but that they were unable to accept the mutilation of their eastern territories. On this point and also at the same time in the military clauses the 'dictate' must be felt all the more painful, since it would be seen more as the result of a betrayal than of a defeat. In the whole course of events it seems to have been forgotten that there was in existence a Danzig population (comprising 96% Germans and only 4% Poles), who, against all principles, were at the disposal of all."[400]

The men, Polish politician Roman Dmowski amongst them, who had carried through their forcible annexations after a lengthy period of hysterical agitation, chose as their basis for the Polish statehood the highly imaginative, constructive and peace-promoting "dogmatic enmity toward Germany," of all things.[401] In this they were in total unison with the Polish military and the Polish public, who were not able to detach themselves from this stance until 1939 – or more accurately put, not until this day.

All reasonable men of Western Europe have recognised and acknowledged the injustices in connection with the Corridor, although this had no influence on the politics of these Powers and of the League of Nations. Not without reason had the United States refused to ratify the Versailles treaty and to participate in the League. This, though, did not stop

the U.S. President F.D. Roosevelt during the years 1937-1939 from laying aside his principles in order to radically change course and to refer to this injustice perpetrated in Eastern Europe as a valid "legal status." This was equally as irresponsible and careless, as when, for instance, the Communists maintain that

> "the national minorities had proved themselves to be breeding grounds for international conflicts, and that the upholding of the principle of the right of ethnic groups – independent of Hitlerite inspiration – was given as a justification for an aggressive attitude."[402]

The victors in Versailles had forcibly torn territories from Germany, had, in the name of "international law," vilified this nation's wish for unification as "aggressive," had falsified history in the sense of a "German guilt" that could be utilised for political purposes, and they were ignoring all the compulsory measures used for liquidating the isolated ethnic minority groups. This "stop the thief" method has made the victors of Versailles and their co-victors socially acceptable on the international scene. Even today they are still practicing it with the same intensity and effect. This has nothing to do, however, with the will and determination for installing justice and peace.

Poland Demands Territories outside of Poland

Even the acquisition of the "Corridor" and Eastern Upper Silesia did not satisfy Poland, and this attitude had caused accusations of imperialism directed at Poland already in 1919 by the Chief Powers of Versailles.[403]

> "These historians regarded as a temporary solution the Polish State that was born in 1918 from the concurrent collapse of the three partitioning powers. They included in their 'historic Poland' large areas to the west and east that lay outside the existing borders."[404]

The Polish concept of a state would consider territorial expansion to the west as vital, because it would increase the availability of raw materials and thus secure for Poland the status of a leading European power. The Polish claims after 1918 knew no bounds. They included East Prussia (99% German), Danzig (96% German), Upper Silesia (60% German), parts of Lower Silesia (95% German) and the "Oder territories" (almost exclusively German). These highly imaginative ambitions had already assumed a political character in numerous statements of the political agitators Sosnowski, Dmowski and Paderewski, or rather in the statements of the

Polish National Committee, founded in Paris in 1917, and in the writings of the Polish peace delegation in Versailles, whose main representatives were Dmowski and Paderewski.

The followers of Dmowski's policies were making demands already at the beginning of the First World War during a lecture talk in Moscow. According to this, Poland was to take possession of East Prussia, of Posen, of West Prussia, of Upper Silesia and two districts of the county of Breslau.[405] In a treatise from July 1917, Dmowski demanded the annexation of Upper Silesia,[406] a small part of Lower Silesia, the provinces of Posen[406] and West Prussia, [406] the districts of Lauenburg and Bütow in the province of Pomerelia, as well as all of East Prussia.[407] In his memorandum he put a choice of two possibilities to the western politicians:

> "On the one hand, the future of 2 million Germans in East Prussia shall be secured at the expense of 25-30 million Poles. Among those 2 million, a considerable number would be German by language only; many of them would still remember that they are of Polish or Lithuanian origin, and often they would have a hostile attitude toward the Germans.
>
> On the other hand, the second possibility would be for Poland to establish her State within the proposed borders. 'In that way the (above mentioned) Germanised strip of land will be cut off from Germany, will quickly be developed economically and, at the same time, will be opened up to Polish influence and to Polish immigration. It is not difficult to decide which of the two solutions is the more humane and more in accord with justice.'" [407]

How much this population of West and East Prussia – the latter had never been under Polish rule – remembered their "Polish origin," could be seen from the results of the few plebiscites which were held there in 1920: The district of Marienwerder (eastern West Prussia) voted 93% for Germany, while the district of Allenstein (southern East Prussia) voted 98% for Germany.[408]

What in the name of this "justice" was to happen to the East Prussian population was clearly articulated in the Polish "specialists' memorandum" of March 1919, which was presented to the Peace conference:

> "The territorial isolation of East Prussia, this seat of Prussian militarism, is necessary for a lasting peace, and this must result in a voluntary and continuous de-Germanisation of this important strategic area, from whence the Prussian dynasty has set off to conquer the world."[409]

Dmowski also found arguments for requesting the incorporation of Danzig into this new Poland, since he had falsified totally the history of this German city:

> "The Danzig of today is German; but under normal conditions, that is, with the requirements of a natural economic development, it will inevitably become a Polish city."[410]

Dmowski expressed himself still more clearly in the previously quoted memorandum of March 1919:

> "The Germanisation of Danzig is superficial and, as soon as the Poles have the right to settle there, the city will once again become Polish, just like Krakow and other cities in Poland which at a certain era have had a German majority..."[411]

Up to the middle of 1918, the Polish ambitions were met everywhere only with resistance, disbelief and shaking of the head. Dmowski himself wrote:

> "In Western Europe, not only amongst politicians, but also among men of science, geographers, statisticians, the idea was so entrenched that the coastline of the Baltic Sea up to the mouth of the Memel was German and could only be German that, when I began to talk about our territorial claims to the Baltic coast, they started rubbing their eyes, looking at me as if I were half mad. This went on for about three years.
>
> It is difficult for people to get rid of deep-seated ways of thinking. Still in the spring of 1918, a high-ranking French diplomat, who had devoted much time to the Polish question, told me:
>
> 'But it would truly be a miracle, Sir, if things were to happen as you say and your state reached up to the Baltic!'
>
> 'Perhaps it would be a miracle,' I replied, 'but the miracle must happen, if both your country, as well as we Poles, want to exist as an independent nation…'
>
> We have obtained that piece of coastline only because the war lasted so long, allowing us time to create favourable conditions, and especially to spread precise information about the true state of affairs in Pomerania."[412]

It was not clear to President Wilson – as indeed many arguments of the Poles were not clear to him – why Poland and France, within the framework of the League of Nations, should be the "acting executive body" with regard to Germany.[413] Yet none of this stopped Dmowski's memorandum of 8 October 1918 not only from being presented to the U.S. President as well as to the Versailles Peace conference, but also from being seriously discussed – although according to these proposals, not even 50% of the inhabitants of this new Poland would be of Polish origin.[414] In this memorandum East Prussia was falsely and mendaciously described as "conditions there being positively medieval," where "the peasant masses were kept in near-slavery and were brought up in the spirit of servitude." If "social and political progress" were to be introduced there, then, according to Dmowski – and this report of his was submitted in the name of the Polish National Committee! – East Prussia had to go to Poland.[415]

The reference to the prospective votes of 4 million Polish-Americans did the rest for Wilson,[416] although the Poles had not yet managed to make all their Western partners see things their way.

"… Yet the Polish ruling class and Polish intellectuals had aimed at the restoration of a Poland bounded by the frontiers of 1772. These frontiers would not in any way correspond with ethnical boundaries, and a State contained within them would not be a National State.

Historical Poland was not a National State, but a multinational Empire which arose in the course of centuries when the dogma of Nationalism, as understood in modern times, did not exist."[417]

The British Foreign Minister, Balfour, also energetically opposed the French with the explanation:

"I have listened to this recommendation with concern; the Poland of 1772 shall become that of 1918, according to your reports. We did not pledge ourselves to that. What we have committed ourselves to is the creation of a Poland comprising Poles. The State of 1772 does not meet this objective." [416]

Precisely what these facts expound most clearly is that "there is nowhere in the publications on international law, including the Polish literature, the assertion to be found that the Poland of today (after 1918) is the re-establishment of the Polish Kingdom of old."[418] Otherwise, the long-winded debate on "Polish independence" during the years 1917-1923 would surely have been redundant, yes, even nonsensical, if one had merely wanted to re-establish the former Polish State.

"It is clear that the real Poles are in the grip of a fever of conquest, in that they, while unable to revise borders which have turned out to be impossible to maintain, are only thinking of new conquests."[419]

Again and again the demand for revising the Versailles Treaty resounded throughout Poland after 1919. This, however, was understood by the Polish politicians to mean merely the fulfilment of *further* claims, first and foremost the claim for the entire province East Prussia and of the city of Danzig. Roman Dmowski, the leading Polish agitator at Versailles, explained in 1923:

"I never fought for the return of Poland – since that was taken for granted. What I was fighting for was the creation of a Greater Poland. The present-day Poland is not small, but we must all keep in mind that it is only the first instalment for a truly Greater Poland. As yet Poland is not a totally complete empire, but she must expand until she has become one, if her continued existence is ever to be permanent."[420]

Roman Dmowski was not alone in this. President Wojciechowski was emphasising the request for additional territories for the purpose of creating a Greater Poland. [420] In the same year of 1923, the Polish Minister of Education and the Arts, Stanislaw Grabski, in his work "Observation on the present historical Moment of Poland," had elevated the Polish expansion

northwards into the supreme principle for Poland's foreign policy. The objective of this policy was to be

> "reinforcing the elements of victory in the struggle with Germany that was not yet at an end...
> The Baltic coast will, sooner or later, be the object of a clash between Poland and Germany…
> The Polish people cannot accept the result of the plebiscite in the Masuren region [98% pro-German] as the final verdict in this affair… The existence of the republic can only ever be of a permanent nature once we are victorious in the unavoidable fight against Germany."[421]

The right-wing parties in Poland, particularly the National-Democrats, were rejecting a border revision along ethnographic principles already for the reason that the Treaty of Versailles had not satisfied all of their territorial demands. But also the political centre and the left were not prepared to go along with it.[422] The National-Democratic Party of Poland was keeping alive their pan-Slavic expansionism, which had already been agreed upon as a Russian-Polish war aim in mid-August 1914 between the Russian Foreign Minister Sasonov and Dmowski and was condoned during the First World War by the Western Powers[423] during the period 1919-1939. Dmowski's party colleague Giertych wrote on the subject of the Treaty of Versailles:

> "Under the treaty, Poland obtained far more of the territories stripped from Germany than all the other states in Europe put together, including France…
> If any country can look upon the Versailles Treaty as a great political triumph, that country is Poland. ...
> We can say without exaggeration that, after the union with Lithuania in the year 1386, the Versailles Treaty constitutes the greatest achievement of Polish diplomacy in the course of our thousand year history...
> Versailles is the only political victory in our history since the 17th century."[424]

In a speech in Posen in 1923, Roman Dmowski took "the gifts from the coalition at the western borders, where Poland had not attained anything by her own efforts" merely for "a small down-payment for a truly Greater Poland."[425] His National-Democratic doctrine did not simply intend to claim for Poland what was Polish, but rather

> "that Poland demand as much as she could manage to Polonise."[426]

The Polish paper *Dzien Polski* stated in 1923:

> "The taking possession of the Memelland was to be only the trial run for the eventual inevitable impending acquisition of East Prussia by Poland."[427]

The *Gazeta Gdansk* on 9 October 1925 wrote:

> "Poland must insist on the fact that she cannot exist without Königsberg and the whole of East Prussia. We must now demand at Locarno that the entire East Prussia be dissolved. It can have an autonomy with Polish sovereignty. Then there will no longer be a Corridor. Should this not come

about in a peaceful way, then there will be a second Tannenberg and then, hopefully, would all domains return to the fold of their beloved motherland."[428]

A high-ranking Polish General Staff officer, H. Baginski, in a book published in Warsaw in 1927 and awarded the annual prize of the "Polish commission for international intellectual co-operation," specified the main aims of Polish foreign policy: annexation of Danzig, East Prussia and most of Silesia.

"There can never be peace in Europe until all Polish territories are restored to Poland, until the name Prussia, the name of a nation no longer in existence, is erased from the map of Europe, until the Germans have moved their capital westwards from Berlin, for example to the former capital of Magdeburg upon Elbe, or Merseburg upon Saale, until their state has again assumed its former name and until they have stopped dreaming about a 'revision of their border in the East.'"[429]

The French professor of Slavonic studies, René Martel, stated in 1929:

"All Polish ideas end up, basically, as plans for expansion. Far from wishing to resolve the question of the Corridor in a manner acceptable to Germany, they are dreaming in Poland of extending that territory by annexing Danzig and East Prussia in one way or another." [429]

An article appearing in 1930 in the review *Mocarstwowiec* ("The great power league"), close to Pilsudski and, like all publications, government-controlled as they were, read in part:

"We are aware that war between Poland and Germany cannot be avoided. We must systematically and energetically prepare ourselves for this war. The present generations will see that a new victory at Grunwald [allusion to the Battle of Tannenberg 1410] will be inscribed in the pages of history. But we shall fight this Grunwald in the suburbs of Berlin. Our ideal is to round Poland off with frontiers on the Oder [river] in the west and the Neisse [river] in Lausatia, and to incorporate Prussia, from the Pregel [river] to the Spree [river]. In this war no prisoners will be taken, there will be no room for humanitarian feelings. We shall surprise the whole world in our war with Germany."[430]

British journalist Colonna rightly added:

"Such boasts and threats as these have not, of course, been made by the whole Polish people. On the contrary, the ordinary man in the street in Poland definitely opposes the idea of fighting for a new frontier and is all for peace. But there is an element in Poland which demands that Germany should be partitioned." [430]

During the year 1930-1931 there was published by the Polish parliament (*Sejm*) an official memorandum "Aims of Polish Foreign Policy" of the Foreign Ministry in Warsaw, in which Oder and Sudeten are described as the western-border-aspiration.[431]

"The witness K. Graebe had been continuously, from 1922-1936, a member of the Polish Sejm. He was born in Karniszewo, district of Gnesen, province of Posen... – The witness emphasises that, since the founding of the Polish state, German-Polish antagonism had been increasing year by year due particularly to the harsh and often terrorising attitude of the Poles toward the large German minority. …

There is, moreover, no doubt that Poland had, right from the beginning, practiced an active anti-German policy that was not satisfied with the territories stripped from Germany.

I recall an official report of the Polish Foreign Office from that time – it was perhaps in the year 1931 – entitled 'Aims of Polish Foreign Policy,' which dealt with the desired westward expansion, giving very precise details. In this memorandum, already at that time, was the aspired-to western border described as the Oder-Neisse-Line. ... My colleagues and I understood this report to be an extraordinary threat to Germany and, considering the hostile attitude of the Poles, we feared, then already, an armed conflict."[432]

The Polish nationalists were making additional demands for Memel and Lithuanian territory, as well as Czech and Slovakian assets.[433]

"For the Polish press it was not enough that every request for a modification of the borders in favour of Germany had been rejected, but was propagating the need for 'the restoration of all Polish territories to Poland.' Thus we may read, for example, in the *Kalendarz Morski* (Gdingen) that the Polish people 'with all resoluteness' must demand 'the return of East Prussia' and, in the event of this not happening, 'the world would awake one day amid a thunderous roaring of war.'

The result of the plebiscites in East and West Prussia of 1920 was fiercely attacked at every opportunity as a falsification of the true circumstances. Poland could not relinquish her 'ancient rights..."[434]

The Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, in 1932:

"Poland could not even be content with the status quo."[435]

The Polish deputy commissioner general in Danzig, Lalicki, also in 1932:

"Today we cannot name the day and the hour when the Versailles Treaty will be redressed. Not only the Poles of Danzig, but also our brothers enslaved by Germanic hatred in East Prussia will return to the motherland. The day will come – it has dawned already – when Danzig will be returned."[436]

In the year 1939 also, members of the Polish government were repeatedly involved in increasing the warmongering and the propagating of these territorial demands – quite apart from the government-controlled press that was keyed into this tune anyway. It is regrettable that in all this nobody thought of reproaching any of them for "being vengeful" and "warmongering," and a law forbidding the "stirring-up of hatred amongst nations" and "racial mania" did not exist in Poland either.

"Grey clouds hung in the sky, and it was chilly on that Sunday in March 1939. In the Elizabeth Market in Bromberg stood a dense mass of people. Many uniforms with decorations: the Polish Association of Ex-Servicemen and of the Resistance as well as the Western Frontier Association had summoned people to a rally. Flags, prayers, speeches. When the sentence fell, 'We want Oppeln and Königsberg!' the cheering would not stop. 'We will not hand over the land from whence comes our race,' was sung by the crowd. Already children in school were learning the 'Rota' composed by the Polish poet Maria Konopnicka. This was a hate song, directed at the Germans. Straight after the Paternoster and the national anthem. 'The Germans will not spit in our face!' was resounding throughout the square. A Catholic priest gave his blessing, the flags were lowered, the crowd went down on their knees, the bells of the Elizabeth church were ringing. Then a procession lined up. Half an hour later, Polish policemen were trying to protect the windows of the German shops in the main streets against the blind zeal of the protesters. Standing

in front of the windows with outstretched arms they were really trying their utmost to force back the crowd. They were doing their duty. But it did not help much.

One or two days earlier, it was said in the newspaper that Great Britain had given the government in Warsaw far-reaching guarantees…"[437]

On 3 June 1939, the Polish Vice Premier Kwiatkowski declared at the opening meeting of the Economic Council of Pomerelia:

"Pomerelia is, and ever will remain, Poland's connection with the world."[438]

Equally, the Social Welfare Minister Koscialkowski stated on 4 June 1939, on the occasion of the unveiling of the Pilsudski Memorial Tablet at the Polish town of Ciechocinek:

"The possession of Pommerellen [Pomerelia] is an indispensable condition for Poland's economic and political prosperity… In the event of a struggle being forced upon Poland, to regain those ancient Polish regions which ought to have come to Poland long ago, is the aim of this fight." [438]

Apart from the innumerable press reports and statements that were made by leading spokesmen of the Polish public and delivered with the same aggressive zeal, there were five books in particular that would endorse this attitude of mind:

"They [these books] wanted to call to mind Poland's 'historic right' to these territories [Danzig, East Prussia, Silesia and Pomerelia] and, with their skilful presentation, achieved that purpose at least in part."[439]

The first of these books:

Consulibus, *Experiences and errors of our foreign policy with regard to the tasks of the present*, Warsaw 1926. Content: Demands partition of East Prussia between Poland and Lithuania and of Upper Silesia between Poland and Czecho-Slovakia.

The second: Melchior Wankowicz, *On the trail of the Smentek*, Warsaw 1936. Content: A journey through East Prussia, which will reveal the alleged oppression of the Mazurs, who, for their part, had become almost completely alienated from Poland.

The third: J. Kilarski *Gdansk*, Posen 1937. Content: The city of Danzig is passed off as being formerly Polish; the population is allegedly only awaiting liberation from their 'white-wash coating' of Germanness.

The fourth: Stanislaw Wasylewski, *In the Oppelner Silesia*, Kattowitz 1937. Content: Aim and purpose of this book would be – according to the author – to acquaint the Polish public with a hardly noticed piece of ground, neglected and forgotten by Poland for centuries.

The fifth: Jozef Kisielewski, *The soil preserves the past*, Posen 1939. Content: "We were on the Elbe, we were pushed beyond the Oder... A favourable wind is filling our sails. After a long span of disfavour..."

> "These voices that were most typical of the time, were accompanied by a chorus of similar but less noticeable oral and written utterances which were intensifying to the degree that the German-Polish relations were worsening. In 1939, a leaflet distributed by the organising committee for the Grunewald anniversary celebration [in commemoration of the Battle of Tannenberg 1410] at Bielitz bluntly stated: 'We will take back what the German has taken from us on the Elbe, the Oder and the Vistula!'" [439]

The Polish periodical *Tempo Dnia* was informed already on 30 July 1939 on "the Polish peace conditions after the next war" to the effect that they were able to delineate that East Prussia, Upper Silesia and Pomerelia as far as Kolberg will go to Poland.[440]

Polish annexationist maps were posted in Polish cities as placards showing red-white Polish flags on German cities as far as Stettin.[441] On 29 June 1939 the *Illustrowany Kurjer* criticised the 1919 borders: Since these were allegedly unfair to Poland, it was suggested that future opportunities would permit the improvement of the Polish western frontier. [441]

It was known in London that Poland was even hoping to take over the former German colonies.[442]

> "Frequently maps were also depicted which, for example, would supposedly represent the Polish 'west frontiers' at the time of King Boleslaw the Brave (Chrobry) or under Boleslaw Crooked Mouth – frequently, not entirely faithful to historical assessments, they would extend as far as the Elbe or Saale. Even at the military-geographical institute in Warsaw a gigantic mural was uncovered a few years before the outbreak of the Second World War, depicting how Boleslaw the Brave (Chrobry, according to the legend) had boundary posts knocked into the ground on the Saale."[443]

However, the Polish demands for German land were not isolated occurrences. The official program of the Polish Western Frontier Association, as defined in April 1926, demanded the drawing up of a Polish frontier from the Oder in the west (to include Stettin) up to the middle and lower Duna in the east (including Riga).

> "At the same time [1926], there was being propagated, in a paper by an author calling himself 'Consulibus,' the partition of East Prussia between Poland and Lithuania and of Upper Silesia between Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. But even outside of the protective anonymity of manifestos and reports, influential politicians were admitting to the selfsame ideas." [443]

When in 1921, after her war of aggression against the fledgling Soviet Union, Poland conquered huge swaths of land in the east by dictating a new borderline to the Bolsheviks in the "treaty" of Riga, thus incorporating

seven million Ukrainians and two million White Russians into her state, this did by no means signify that the dreams of a Great Polish Empire between the three seas – the North Sea, the Black Sea and the Adriatic – of the "geopolitical region of Poland" were now fulfilled. The Polish magazine *Nasza Przyszlosc* was proposing a Polish-Japanese border along the Urals in the summer of 1939. Polish maps depicting national frontiers reaching the Volga, along with corresponding publications and utterances by well-known Poles, were no isolated efforts. [443] The Greater Polish notions of incorporating the Ukraine up to and including Kiev and an overland connection to the Black Sea were as alive in 1939 in Polish government circles as they had been in 1919-1920.[444]

> "Mr. Beck 'made no secret of the fact that Poland had aspirations directed towards the Soviet Ukraine,' when Ribbentrop visited Warsaw on 1 February [1939]."[445]

Up to this year "Poland alone had a blueprint for the reduction of Russian power in the East."[446]

For years the Polish governments have been tolerating these trends, have encouraged them, supported them and justified them. Not one of these demands have come about from any so-called need for having to offer resistance to the National Socialist form of rule in Germany or indeed to the foreign politics of the Third Reich. "The Piastian idea" of westward expansion was an equally purely Polish body of thought as was that of expansion northward and eastward.[447] There is proof that the aim of the Polish general public before 1933 and after 1933 was exactly the same: to drive out and to displace the East German population.

> "The Poles tried systematically to drive out the Germans...
> As early as 1933 there were moments, as an experienced American observer wrote, when 'the tension seemed too great to be borne any longer.'"[448]

From the time of her renewed establishing in the year 1916, or rather 1918, up to 1939, Poland has been at war with every one of her neighbours (except Rumania) or was preparing to go to war. Of the 5,147 kilometres of Polish border, almost 4,000 kilometres were disputed. In spite of her painful wounds, Germany remained the only neighbouring country in these twenty years with whom Poland could enjoy temporary friendly relations – during the Hitler period! During the generally considered "peace-loving" Stresemann era of Weimar Germany, Poland was pursuing her policy of hostility toward Germany as ardently as ever. The short-lived friendship

with the Third Reich between 1934 and 1938 was certainly only possible, because Hitler had not pressed for a revision of the unjust Versailles requirements and was prepared "to temporarily give up the German interests in Danzig in order to win over the Poles."[449]

Roman Dmowski "noted in his memoirs that Wilson did not understand the details of the Polish problem, had no feeling for European politics, and was unduly devoted to the idea that everything could be settled on the basis of international law."[450] International law was not high in demand by the Polish leadership during the period 1919-1939. Instead, they were intoxicated with other notions starting out from different principles of conquest, imperialism and ethnic cleansing. The British writer and historian J.W. Wheeler-Bennett's mocking tone seems appropriate: Poland had been conducting her policy like "a canary who has persistently but unsuccessfully endeavored to swallow two cats." [450]

In his memoirs, the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, described that policy as follows:

> "Pilsudski well knew how much Poland owed to the victorious Allies of the first war. He was not blind either to the strength of the Western Powers or to the fact that their own interest prompted them to help Poland to achieve a place in the sun, despite pressure from her neighbours to the East and West. But he was more inclined to rely on his own resources than on the goodwill of Allies whom he lacked either the means or the inclination to get to know more closely. Moreover, Pilsudski, and especially those of his disciples who came to power after him, suffered, perhaps unconsciously, from an inferiority complex. It was, in their eyes, vitally important to cure their fellow countrymen of their supposedly submissive and deferential attitude towards foreigners, due to uncritical admiration of the latters' material or cultural superiority. This frame of mind on the part of Pilsudski and his successors gave rise to the so-called 'Great Power policy.' In the Marshal's day this was no doubt justified by political calculation; but after his death it degenerated into a noxious fiction which threatened the very existence of the Polish State."[451]

However, this recognition did not prevent Raczynski to subscribe to the very same expansionist, "great power" mentality with which he charged the leadership. This emerges powerfully from his open letter to Lloyd George of 25 September 1939: In this letter he accused Lloyd George to be essentially responsible for the Polish defeat, because in 1919 he had awarded to Poland a "strategically indefensible" frontier[452] and because he had prevented "the demilitarisation of East Prussia" and "the restoration of the historic union of Danzig with Poland."[453]

That the Polish leadership in the spring of 1939 was making claims to colonies and was intending to discuss these with the British government,[454] and that three weeks later Lord Halifax was giving the unconditional

guarantee against Germany in the full knowledge of these expansionist endeavours on the part of Poland – or precisely because of that? – should just be mentioned in passing.

> "The fact that the true political aim of the Polish ruling class was not nationalist at all but imperialist, that it involved the domination of Poles over large numbers of people of origin other than Polish, has never been sufficiently understood in Western Europe."[455]

Poland's Policy on Her Minorities

Fundamental Position

In spite of the Treaty for the Protection of Minorities, as decreed by the League of Nations, Poland considered Posen, West Prussia and the misappropriated part of Upper Silesia, but also the German city of Danzig, as territories to be "Polonised" once and for all. These aims were openly declared, and the relevant measures were taken stage by stage without any consideration for the people affected. Poland was using every conceivable means in this struggle for the cultural, traditional and national element and identity. The yearly agrarian reforms and the reallocation and consolidation of agricultural land, as well as the border zone laws, all contributed to a bloodless dispossession of the German population. In 1920-1921, a referendum during which the voter had to opt for a particular nationality had unannounced dire consequences for those entering their nationality as German: hundreds of thousands of Germans were subsequently expelled from their land. German was prohibited as an official language and severely constricted otherwise. Exorbitant taxes, confiscation of community buildings and newspaper offices, systematic boycotting of German firms and shops, biased prosecutions against the press, lawsuits and bureaucratic harassment all led to financial strain, then to economic ruin and, finally, to the Germans being uprooted from their homeground. German associations and organisations were banned, professional licenses refused or revoked, businesses expropriated. German employees were systematically laid off, then deprived of unemployment benefit and evicted from company accommodation. All jobs in the public sector were allotted to Polish immigrants. Trade and commerce of the Germans were heading toward ruin, especially since young Germans were denied apprenticeships. German

schools were closed, German teachers intimidated if not dismissed, and German students were expelled from universities and thereby prevented from professional training.

> "Of the 657 public schools for the German minorities in the year 1925 (1927: 498), there remained, at the beginning of the school year 1938-39, only 185 (150 in Posen and West Prussia and 35 in Upper Silesia).
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> Resistance to this policy was faced down with the most drastic measures...
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> In 1924 alone, about a third of all German holdings (510,000 hectares) went into liquidation."[456]

Insults and violence were also the order of the day, and in most cases the Polish police refused to give protection to the German victims. The cultural life of the German minority was thus paralyzed by these measures.

The "liquidation of German estates and the de-Germanisation of the western provinces" was no accidental public utterance from the former Premier Sikorski in 1923; it had been unconcealed government policy since 1919.[457] In October of that year, the future Minister for Education and the Arts, Stanislaw Grabski, announced the "Posen program" at a delegates' conference with the following words:

> "We want to base our relations on love, but there is a love for fellow countrymen and another love for foreigners. Their percentage amongst us is by far too high. Posen can show us how 14 per cent or even 20 per cent can be reduced to 1.50 per cent. That foreign element will need to decide whether it will be better off somewhere else. Poland is exclusively for the Poles!"[458]
>
> "Such remarks were not an isolated occurrence, unfortunately."[459]

Following a few examples of the various means of displacement:

> "Withholding or withdrawal of citizenship, followed by expulsion from the territory on the grounds of dealing with a 'foreigner,' deportation of former civil servants, teachers and other public employees together with their families, one-sided administration of taxes – especially of the enforcement of tax regulations and of the rules for the agrarian reform, withdrawal of entitlements to practise one's occupation (by revoking of licenses, concessions, permits) with the effect of wrecking the basis of economic life, calls for boycott tolerated by the authorities. 'The consequent feeling of insecurity with regards to justice and the awareness of being at the mercy of an alien power gave rise to a state of panic amongst the Germans, leading to panic sales of property and emigration of such magnitude that it even exceeded the consequential result of any Polish force brought to bear.' This policy forced the German element of West Prussia and Posen to emigrate en masse between 1919 and 1926." [459]

German documentation attests:

> "The hatred for anything German had spokesmen in every party. Next to the National Democrats stood the Christian Democrat Korfanty and the Pilsudski follower and Voivode of Silesia, Grazynski. But even stronger than the sway held by political parties over public opinion was the influence of a number of organisations and institutions, although most of all it was the press that considered the fight against everything German to be their sole duty. Foremost of these is to be mentioned the 'Western Marches Society,' whose original purpose had been to secure a Polish national character in the new western territories by a possibly complete displacement of the

German element, but which had soon extended its activities throughout Poland. These consisted in the regular organisation of whole weeks of propaganda, and also in 'spontaneous demonstrations' which were unleashed, after due preparation, against German schools, newspapers, bookshops, as well as against the personal safety of individual Germans. The 'Western Marches Society' was responsible for the 'Black Palm Sunday' 1933 in Lodz, when on that day German cultural institutions (publishing house, school, bookshops etc.) were wrecked. Furthermore, the Polish insurgent associations in Upper Silesia and Posen were to distinguish themselves by their radical, often brutal, anti-German attitudes. They saw to it that even in times when an obvious easing of political tension was evident the anti-German mood was kept alive."[460]

Again, it must be emphasised that this policy was an official government program. Whatever historical documents are consulted, everywhere is to be found depressing evidence of such single-mindedness and degree of violence. Such a brutal policy of ethnic cleansing had hitherto been unknown, even during the time of Prussian or German rule over parts of Poland vis-à-vis the Poles. Whatever Poland might say of the Prussian *Kulturkampf* of the 1870s,[461] the Settlement Law of 1886 or the Expropriation Law of 1908,[462] the fact remains that after a century of German rule (1815-1918), there were in the province of Posen 41.3 per cent and in West Prussia 24.1 per cent of the rural land holdings in the possession of Polish landowners.[463] The generosity of Prussia even went so far as to make it possible, at the turn of the century, for Polish seasonal workers to acquire private land on a scale of 29,000 hectares in the purely German region of East Prussia, where there had never been a Polish settlement before. These seasonal workers were directed by the Western Frontier Association, the *Landbank*, founded in Posen in 1886, and a close network of Polish Co-operative banks and institutes engaged in parcelling out of land.[464] In the notorious memorandum of 8 October 1918, which Roman Dmowski had presented to the American President Wilson, demanding considerable territorial expansion for Poland, this Polish agitator admitted – and thereby the following Polish agitation to this day is reduced to absurdity:

"All the endeavours of the German people and the German government could not break the national resistance of the Poles. The Polish population and the Polish ownership of property were growing steadily and the Polish businessman, as well as Polish industry, was rapidly gaining a foothold in the competition with German commerce and German industry. This is proof of the strength and the ability to survive of the Polish population in the entire territory, and is, at the same time, also the most striking example of a government acting against the will and the interest of the people, a government that will retain its destructive character as long as the Polish provinces are part of Germany."[465]

Let history record the following: While under German rule, "Polish ownership of property was growing steadily," and Polish commerce, as well as Polish industry, "was rapidly gaining a foothold amongst their competitors"!

The Poland of the twentieth century, however, looked upon co-existence with the German people in a completely different light:

> "Weighty also were the economic and social measures put upon members of the [German] minority: expropriation of forest and farmland, dismissal of public and private employees, refusal to take on apprentices and other applicants for employment or to accept applicants for civil service posts, refusal to promote public servants on the grounds of nationality, cancellation of the entitlement to pensions and state benefit income, refusal to consider German-owned businesses for municipal public orders. This in particular affected the Germans in both Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. The persons affected by these and similar restrictions of rights should have had recourse to the protection of the League of Nations. In retrospect it has to be acknowledged with deep regret that the way this duty was discharged by the League was quite inadequate. Already the procedural prerequisites, which had been designed for the complaints of minorities, were detrimental to a speedy and benevolent settlement of such cases; so it was that not even a twentieth part of the petitions, which had been sent to the League of Nations between 1920 and 1930, were given a decisive ruling. The other 95.5 per cent were either rejected or remained unfinished."[466]

In 1936 Marshal Rydz-Śmigły's paper, the Warsaw *Kurjer Porany*, commented on this subject:

> "One cannot actually state that the Germans will succeed in stopping the continuing process of de-Germanisation of the Western regions, but there is no doubt that they intend to put obstacles in the way of this process.
>
> Thus the Poles could be sure of getting ever closer to their goal of ejecting or absorbing the German element. The only thing they need fear from the activity of the Germans was a certain slowing of the pace."[467]

By means of expropriation and land reform, Poland had acquired three-quarters of a million hectares of privately-owned German estates by 1939.[468] But neither Britain nor the League of Nations opposed this policy, neither before 1933 nor after 1933. On the contrary, by their attitude they were encouraging it even at the time when Poland's additional territorial claims must have plainly alerted Britain of the dangers to peace in Europe! Of course, French and British politicians protested now and then in Warsaw, but without any vigour and without any effect. The *Manchester Guardian* reported from Poland on 14 December 1931:

> "The minorities in Poland are to disappear. Polish policy makes sure that they do not disappear on paper only. This policy is recklessly pushed forward, without the least regard for world public opinion, international treaties or the League of Nations. Under Polish rule the Ukraine has become hell. The same can be said of White Russia with even more justification. The aim of the Polish policy is the disappearance of the national minorities, on paper and in reality."[469]

The same British newspaper had stated a year earlier, on 17 October 1930:

> "The Polish terror in the Ukraine is today worse than anything else in Europe. The Ukraine has become a land of despair and destruction. The situation is all the more of a provocation, considering that, while the rights of the Ukrainians have been guaranteed under international law, the League of Nations remains deaf to all their appeals and requests, and the rest of the world knows nothing of the facts, or else does not care..."[470]

The Treaty for the Protection of Minorities, which represented the fundamental condition for the transfer of German land,[471] was cancelled unilaterally by Poland in pursuance of her rigorous "peace mission" in 1934, and she denied the League of Nations the right – agreed under the Treaty – to check on "internal Polish affairs." Leaving that aside, Poland was practicing already before that time, "with a continual flouting of agreed guarantees an extreme policy of oppression," a policy of destruction of the German minority's very foundations of life.[472]

> "A senior Polish government official in Upper Silesia stated: 'We are Polonising again – in ten years' time the job will be finished.'" [472]

An indication of just how charged the German-Polish relations were before 1933 is the fact that up to 1923 over half a million Germans had to leave their homeland Posen-West Prussia and, according to Polish quarters, that number had risen to one million by 1931.[473] That figure represented – even before Hitler came to power – almost half of the local German residents! By August 1939, about 1½ million out of a total of 2.2 million Germans from the territory of the Corridor and East Upper Silesia were forced to flee to the Reich.[474] In the summer of 1939 alone, the number of refugees sheltered in German camps amounted to seventy thousand by 21 August 1939, not counting those refugees who had found private shelter or those who were shot or captured during their flight.[475]

A leading figure of the German co-operative system in West Prussia wrote:

> "The [Polish] school lessons with their reading matter, the newspapers and the Polish broadcasting had been sowing hatred throughout the past twenty years."[476]
>
> "The basic principle, according to which the German minority in Poland was to lead their lives – as stated in the Versailles Treaty – was thus removed [decision of the Polish government to destroy the organisations of the German minority]."[477]
>
> "That this amicable participation of the German co-operatives in the building of the Polish state was answered with suspicion and increasing pressure is only a detail in the German minority's situation in these twenty years between the First and the Second World War." [477]
>
> "The intensified attitude of the State was most evident in the implementation of the political administration, especially concerning police supervision including passport matters. Here the new

changes in the frontier zone regulations of 1934 handed the State authorities within the enlarged border area, now encompassing the whole of Pomerelia and the greater part of the voivodeship of Posen, almost unlimited powers over the citizens, when, among other things, the residing and the right of domicile in the border region could be abolished through administrative channels. These regulations were again tightened in 1937, and the hereditary right to his property of the farmer now became doubtful. Well before the war, the police had forms printed that were used to inform, at the outbreak of war, all those Germans of some prominence at local level or those who had fallen out of favour with the police, of their arrest – the prelude to their deadly trek to the East of Poland."[478]

It was no "Hitler-Fascist" who wrote the following:

"Ever since 1933 in the face of the national consolidating of the whole German nation, the Polish public had been seized by a growing uneasiness. This was aggravated by exaggerated and false reporting which was repeatedly slipping in news of persecution of Poles living in the Reich. Apart from the disquiet, there was spreading an organised stirring-up of the population in Poland...

With the press campaign about the incident in the Westerplatte, the anti-German mood had already come to a climax in March 1933. The tension was not discharged, however, in the form of a conflict with Germany, prepared to fit the prevailing atmosphere, but rather it was vented in attacks on the Germans in Poland. It was here that the pressure of public opinion found an outlet. One could almost speak of a plan, according to which such persecutions of the German element had been prepared to take place. They were not spontaneous expressions of a "seething populace," but were rather brought about by a carefully primed anti-German press and similar organisations..."[479]

"The policy of restriction by the Polish authorities was continued as if there had never been a pact of agreement."[480]

"In the sphere of the politics of culture, tradition and nationality, the natural differences appeared so strong as to almost make it impossible to have any positive relations between the two states."[481]

"Already in the spring of 1933, the Voivode [of Eastern Upper Silesia, Grazynski] had announced, in a programed speech at the Polish Ministry of the Interior, the slogan 'Exterminate the Germans'..."[482]

"The Polish government left the [German] proposals unanswered, and carried on using the Non-Aggression Pact [with Hitler's Germany] as a screen for a rigorous policy of restriction." [482]

Another research result:

"Ignoring all agreements and promises of good will, which were frequently reaffirmed to the protests of the representatives of the German groups in Poland or of the German government, Poland continued its policies of violation until the last days of its existence as an independent nation."[483]

A Dutchman, Louis de Jong, Executive Director of the Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation in Amsterdam, was given the task by UNESCO, after the Second World War, to scholarly examine the frequently quoted and secretive German "Fifth Column." His results:

"The Polish-German non-aggression pact, dating from 1934, was of no real moment. Both the government and public opinion in Poland increased their pressure on the *Volksdeutschen*/German minority."[484]

"No German data, however, have been made known that conflict with the view that the large majority of the '*Reichsdeutschen*' and '*Volksdeutschen*' living in Poland played a passive part up to the arrival of the German troops."[485]

"But it is a remarkable fact that there is no proven or even clear connection with the German military operations for many of the reported observations."[486]

"During the Nuremberg trial of the principal German war criminals, an affidavit of Bohle's was read, in which he asserted that neither the *Auslands-Organisation* nor its members had ever 'in any way received orders, the execution of which might be considered as Fifth Column activity' – neither from Rudolf Hess, whose immediate subordinate Bohle was, nor from himself. Nor had Hitler ever given any directives in that respect, Bohle said. He admitted that there had been Germans abroad who had been used for espionage purposes, but that sort of work had been carried out by the French and the British for their espionage services as well, and in any case the espionage work done by the Germans in question had nothing whatsoever to do with their membership in the *Auslands-Organisation*."[487]

"The arguments used by Hess and Bohle were not printed by the world press." [487]

Professor Hans Koch, an authority on the subject of German nationals abroad, stated:

"Kurt Lück, a leading expert on German-Slavic relations, has compiled a lexicon where in over fifty pages are recorded insulting and obscene Polish songs about the Germans; an enormous number of songs of almost pathological arrogance in which the Germans are usually compared to dogs. On the German side, songs of such profound repugnance are not in existence. On the other hand, it is well known that we have rather a whole array of songs expressing sympathy for the Poles…

Just as there is no well-known novel or poem about the march on Moscow, there is also not a single German book which speaks about the march on Warsaw. However, there exists a two-volume Polish work, published in Thorn in 1927, about a march on Berlin…"[488]

If we set next to this fundamental attitude of the Polish public, which is verifiably documented as having existed for decades, the facts that in Poland, especially during the pre-war years, mass-meetings were taking place under the official slogan "Let's go to Danzig!," "Let's go to Berlin!,"[489] and that there were certain circles of the Western Frontier Association at the same time demanding "to emasculate all German men, so that the German mob in Poland can no longer multiply"[490] – then for every fair-minded person ought to see which of the two side was peaceable and which warmongering. For in all these years, there has never occurred anything similar in Germany; rather a fundamental attitude based principally on respect for and appreciation of the eastern neighbouring nation prevailed here!

The 1937 bilateral minority agreements between Germany and Poland were massively violated by Poland, as Foreign Minister Beck openly admitted.[491]

"Even Minister Beck acknowledges – albeit in extremely cautious wording – for these days, that there seemed 'the voivodes, especially those of Silesia and Posen, were eagerly competing

with each other' 'to take measures which were of little use for resolving the minority questions in our western provinces…'

As 'provocation,' however, was taken by the nationalistic Poles even the most harmless expressions of everyday life, such as use of the German language, etc…"[492]

In 1937, Erwin Hassbach, then senator and chairman of the Council of Germans in Poland, and Rudolf Wiesner, regional head of the German Youth Party (*Jungdeutschen*), once more lodged a complaint with the Sejm:

"The German element in Upper Silesia has become, after a period of fifteen years of the Geneva Convention, a starving, unemployed and desperate group of people. Everything has been taken away from us, over eighty per cent are without jobs and starving in Upper Silesia, our youth is growing up without any chance of being apprenticed; and against our businessmen and traders a relentless campaign is waged. Must we also lose our land? The State and the Polish people need to clearly understand that poverty and starvation have limits which must not be crossed. There has been enough talk about equality and equal rights to jobs and bread for all. We Germans want finally to see action. From now on we intend to push through our national, cultural and economic rights by exercising the internal political channels. The precondition on the Polish side, though, is for them to abandon their intentions of annihilation."[493]

The informal discussions, proposed by Berlin, by experts from their respective Ministries of the Interior with a view to improving the conditions of the minorities in the Reich as also in Poland, were repeatedly rejected by the Polish government.[494]

Intensified Action 1938-1939

Even when "anti-Fascist" historians feel obliged to outline the Polish policies of the pre-war years, they too will reach a conclusion that incriminates the former Polish government. Even these historians confirm that Poland, in her foreign policy and in her dealings with minorities, did not "have a very good hand,"[495] indeed, was not even clear how to resolve the social welfare and constitutional question,[496] or was able to improve the wretched condition of the Polish peasantry;[497] and that Poland was in the forefront of setting up concentration camps. Even these historians verify that the German-Polish minority dispute had not been a fabrication by Hitler. In fact, in the middle of the summer of 1939, the British government made the main requirement for granting a financial credit to Poland "a fundamental readjustment of the Polish economic and financial conditions," which included the devaluation of the zloty.[498]

"On the whole the picture they give [the German publications about the sufferings of the ethnic Germans] tallies with what the Poles reported in their own official publications. If one wishes to

get some idea of persecutions, it would be a mistake to neglect what the victims have to say. They usually have a better memory than their persecutors."[499]

In the opinion of anti-Hitler resistance member Ernst von Weizsäcker from the German foreign office, the Reich government had sent in good time the most outstanding of their ambassadors to Warsaw.[500] Whereas for years Poland was conducting an inflammatory press policy, Germany, in contrast, was rather treading softly in her journalistic publications – to the extent of suppressing reports of outrageous realities. In accordance with the newly changed, even more aggressive direction adopted by Warsaw in the spring of 1939, the seasonal workers who every year in April would go to Germany were detained for the first time, long before the events which allegedly were causing German-Polish friction.[501] Apart from this, the intensified anti-German measures taken by the Polish authorities since February 1939 were, as a result, unleashing such anti-German sentiments that no limit was set, not even the willingness to murder.

"All moral sense and all reason seemed to have disappeared."[502]

There is no causal relationship between these Polish policies and the German negotiation proposals made to Poland on 24 October 1938 or, indeed, with the occupation of Prague on 15 March 1939. They are directly interrelated, however, with the fundamental Polish attitude toward Germany in connection with the promise from London to Warsaw in August/September 1938 to support Poland "as much as possible" against Germany regarding the city of Danzig.[503]

Already after the annexation of the Olsa territory, at the beginning of October 1938, Poland was implementing ruthless measures such as mass-redundancies, abolition of German as official language, which even the Czechs had tolerated, the banning of the German press, of holding assemblies, of organising official events, while outrages and arrests were carried out on the German population, amongst others, but also on the Czech population. (In the parliamentary elections of 1935 in Teschen and Oderberg, the Germans had achieved 46.8% and 40% of the votes, respectively, the Poles only 10% and 20%.) 20% of the German population in the Teschen region – approximately 5,000 people – were forced to leave within the first month of Polish rule. [503] The diplomatic contacts between Poland and Germany remained unaffected by these occurrences, owing to

the restraint of the Reich government, as Hitler had ordered not to publish anything unfavourable about Poland.

In their biting attacks on Germany, the Polish press did not even wait for the British guarantee; rather they were satisfied with secret assurances from London in August and September 1938, as well as the news from January to March 1939 received from London and Washington.[504] Already one month before Hitler's entry into Prague, on 15 February 1939,

> "Poland published, in spite of warnings from the Western Powers against doing so, the List of Names of properties which were soon to be requisitioned for parcelling in the course of the agrarian reform. The list contained an extraordinary large number of German names. On 24 and 25 February there occurred serious anti-German excesses by the student body."[505]

While the land reform robbed the minority Germans in 1938 of two thirds of their arable land, the Frontier Zone Law and agrarian reform of February 1939 expropriated agricultural land, 72% of which belonged to ethnic Germans (in previous years the proportion had averaged 66%).[506] Within a 30 kilometres wide border strip Germans were no longer allowed to own land; this concerned in the 85-110 kilometres wide "Corridor" nearly all of the West Prussian region.[507] In addition, there was the activity of the Western Frontier Association, "the only point on whose program is extermination of the German element at the Polish western frontier." [507] The head of this Western Frontier Association, M. Zaleski, was claiming at the same time, in a speech made at Kattowitz, that Poland had made the pact with Germany in 1934 only for tactical reasons, so as to prepare the ground for a future conflict; that it would be a comfortable screen for the Polish government to hide behind while they could rid themselves of the German minority.[508] Those with specialised knowledge of this development had realised these realities already earlier. Additionally to the agrarian reform, countless German enterprises, community buildings and associations were closed, confiscated or demolished; German children were tormented in school by their Polish school mates, who were taught to hate them; German farmhouses were set on fire; "demonstrations against the Germans" were organised; there were mass-arrests, expulsions initiated, fighting tolerated and fomented; workers were systematically dismissed; the defining of the state of emergency in the border zone was extended to over one third of the Polish sovereign territory;[509] and wide-ranging lists of arrest warrants were prepared.

The British backing, hinted at since August/September 1938, then the official blank check of 31 March 1939, but also the goading tone of President Roosevelt, boosted Polish chauvinism into open persecution of the minority Germans. For several months British Ambassador Kennard had been warning his government about the dangerous consequences of these Polish activities.

The German government was also repeatedly drawing London's attention during the decisive months of the year 1939 – April to August – to the exceedingly grave occurrences in Poland. Factually correct – and never refuted by historical research – the German White Book ascertained in the year 1939:

> "German protests were of no avail (No. 360). At the beginning of April, a public appeal proclaiming the general program for de-Germanisation of the country was circulated throughout Poland (No. 358). Towards the middle of April, the first German fugitives crossed the frontier (No. 359). It was practically impossible for the Consulates to report every individual case (No. 361). Anti-German agitation raged unchecked in Upper Silesia (No. 362). Reports from the German Consuls were full of terrorist acts (No. 363). The Polish Insurgents Society gave the orders for these actions (No. 364). On May 6, the Consul-General in Kattowitz reported two hundred acts of terror (No. 365) and on May 19, another hundred, all of which had occurred in Upper Silesia alone (No. 372). All Germans were in fear of their lives and property. Terrorism spread also to Congress Poland and was intensified by systematic acts of incendiarism (No. 366). The last strongholds of German culture were destroyed (No. 369, 373, 374, 377, 379, 383, 385, 390, 391, 399, etc.). In despair, the German minority appealed to the Polish President (No. 369). The British Government, although kept informed by the German Embassy in London of the nature of these developments which inevitably endangered peace (No. 368), remained inactive. Towards the middle of May, anti-German demonstrations developed into pogroms, in the course of which thousands of Germans were hunted 'like unprotected game' (Nos. 370, 371). The number of fugitives increased (No. 374) as did Polish 'sabre-rattling,' the declaration of annexationist war aims (Nos. 367, 378) and public insults and affronts to the Fuehrer which led to renewed protests (No. 382). In the commercial world, German co-operative societies, dairies and pharmacies were systematically liquidated (Nos. 380, 395). On June 7 a report from Lodz stated: 'The threat of death, torture etc., for German nationals, has become an everyday matter of course.' Whole families, because of constant threats of murder, passed their nights in the shelter of the woods (No. 381).
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> The only answer to protests lodged with the Polish Foreign Office was a shrug of the shoulders and the tacit avowal that nothing could be done against the military authorities and Polish chauvinism (Nos. 382, 385). …
>
> Polish bishops were requested by a colonel on the General Staff to pray 'that the time of tribulation for our Polish brethren beyond the frontier might be shortened and that another Grunwald might release them from bondage' (No. 392)…
>
> Time and time again the authorities themselves proved to be responsible for this process of liquidation (No. 396). …
>
> Germans in Galicia were faced with annihilation; the outlook was hopeless, and they were threatened with arson and murder (No. 407). What was left undone by open terrorism was made up for by an insupportable burden of taxes and chicanery on the part of the authorities (No. 408)."[510]

Independent historians were also confirming these facts after the war:

"What happened to Poland in 1939 was by no means surprising. The outcome had, as a matter of fact, been predicted quite early in the twenties by thoughtful analysts and a handful of statesmen. Yet these early predictions were easily forgotten. The superficial stabilization of conditions in Poland, propaganda, wishful thinking, emotional judgment, and an erroneous evaluation of the real strength behind the saber-rattling of the Pilsudski-ite regime, combined to create, in the thirties, the false picture of a Poland which had seemingly come to stay, even if under somewhat difficult conditions. The annihilation of the Polish state must have come as a shock to many who had been exposed to the optimistic picture (including the bulk of the Polish population, misled into interpreting its government's bluster as strength). To the well-informed it was hardly a surprise; however, the pretense of being shocked by what was perfectly predictable is a standard form of behavior in international relations."[511]

"Months before the outbreak of hostilities the Polish government had given orders for drawing up lists of suspect *Reichsdeutsche* and *Volksdeutsche*. This was probably done in April and May 1939, at about the time that Hitler denounced the German-Polish non-aggression pact. Some groups of ethnic Germans, as we saw, were taken into custody before the outbreak of war and were conveyed to internment camps."[512]

"In many places Polish patriotic societies had drawn up their own lists of those whom they deemed untrustworthy. These lists too were worked through and [from 1 September 1939] often in a very rough way."[513]

"German agricultural co-operatives were dissolved and many of their schools – already few in any case – were closed down, while *Volksdeutsche* who were active in the cultural sphere were taken into custody. Around the middle of May in one small town where 3,000 *Volksdeutsche* lived among nearly 40,000 Poles, in many houses and shops household effects were smashed to bits. In the middle of June the remaining German club-buildings were closed down.

By mid-August the Poles proceeded to arrest hundreds of *Volksdeutsche* by way of preventive measure. Again they chose those who filled leading functions in the community life of the *Volksdeutschen*. German printing-shops and trade-union offices were closed. On August 24 eight *Volksdeutsche* who had been arrested in Upper Silesia were shot down during transport."[514]

"In view of the British-Polish guarantee in 1939, the tide [of oppression of the German minority in Poland] was rising higher and higher and was drowning the original problem: Danzig and passage through the Corridor."[515]

A French historian, Professor Lebre, wrote:

"The Polish nationalists, who were decidedly opposed to any rapprochement with Germany and who had support in the army, but mainly in the Ministry of the Interior, exploited the situation [the annexation of the Olsa territory] so as to submit the Germans, who were living in the newly occupied area, to chicaneries."[516]

"This state of mind [divorced from reality] was expressed in clumsy provocations, and Count Szembek [Undersecretary in the Polish Foreign Ministry] found himself constrained on 16 May 1939, to direct the attention of the Prime Minister, Skladkowski, to 'the excesses of our propaganda within Poland directed against Germany, *e.g.*, distributing a map on which our borders stretch from Berlin to Moscow, with Lithuania included in the national territory.' The minstrels are making all kinds of inappropriate jokes about Germany and the person of Hitler."[517]

"The overwrought state of the Polish public opinion might explain, amongst other things, the headstrong attitude of Colonel Beck at the most critical hours, mainly of the last two days of August."[518]

Does it not make one wonder to find that, when in documentary standard works as, for instance, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten* ("Contemporary World History in Documents") by Prof. Michael Freund, which are put at the service for establishing Hitler's sole war guilt, there

could be neither documentary evidence produced nor could even the claim be made that German acts of provocation in the region of the Corridor in 1939 were responsible for disturbing German-Polish relations? Neither in Prof. Freund's work nor in any other serious publication is it claimed that the *Documents on the Events Preceding the Outbreak of the War* in the German White Books, dealing with the treatment and the ousting of the German element in Poland, are in any way exaggerated, are not objective or factual or indeed falsified. On the contrary, we find the statement about "the actual harsh and even cruel treatment of the German minority in Poland," and the fact that the "Polish nation was in the grip of an unceasing wave of Germanophobia."[519]

> "Nobody is claiming that the German minorities in Poland were treated with generosity."[520]

About the systematic dispossession of property since 1918/1919, about the public appeal throughout Poland at the beginning of April 1939 for the de-Germanisation of the country starting with the total economic boycott of the German minority,[521] about Revenue Office directives "to reduce the property of the German minority in Poland by all available means,"[522] about the arbitrary arrests, about the chicanery of the judiciary and the destruction of the livelihood of people by the Polish authorities, about all of these – there is silence today.

The German element in Poland has always behaved loyally, and thousands of ethnic Germans were complying when drafted to the Polish army.

> "The Polish authorities, while in office, never once attempted to prove disloyalty on the part of the Germans in Poland since, apart from some isolated cases, it would have been impossible to do so."[523]

None of the German minority's organisations, be they political or economic, was ever put at the disposal of the German military operations, whereas the same cannot be said of the Polish minority groups in Germany.[524] Now as in the past, the statement of the Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, made in the afternoon on 31 August 1939, is still undisputed, "that no further serious incidents [from the German side] had taken place."[525] Only once did Beck complain to the British Ambassador about "acts of sabotage"; that was on 31 August 1939 at 19.41 p.m., when he added, however, that it was not known whether the originators were Germans or Ukrainians.[526]

This correct German attitude was confronted by Polish provocations, which a German historian describes from his own experience in West Prussia:

> "The assaults and other acts of violence were increasingly accompanied by threats to finish off the Germans once and for all. Many Poles were intimating that black lists were kept or were going to be drawn up. The vast majority of the Polish nation let itself be engulfed by a feeling of hatred toward the Germans, and was, in fact, in a political psychosis, from which individuals, let alone the masses, were abandoning themselves to commit against the German people every act imaginable, even the most unbridled and the most savage. The threats were getting ever more vindictive, the attacks ever more bloodied. The authorities, however, were beginning to make preparations on a large scale for the arrest and mass deportation of Germans."[527]

Another historian:

> "Since the spring of 1939 Poland had been making extensive preparations for war. Throughout the whole summer a Polish army was deployed along the line from Posen in the south to Bromberg in the north. This was the external situation in which the Polish government was determined to dissolve all organisations of the German minority through administrative channels."[528]

The post-war German Federal Office of Statistics in Wiesbaden – an office undoubtedly to be regarded as absolutely factual, wrote:

> "Not taken into account in these figures [statistical registration of the ethnic Germans' population movements] is the mass flight of the German people from Poland. This was, under the threat of hostilities breaking out ever since mid-1939, triggered by the Polish persecutions of the German people. By the end of August [1939] about 70,000 Germans from Poland were living in refugee camps in the Reich whilst thousands of others had found private accommodation.
>
> Primarily it was the intensified Polish pressure, increasingly felt since 1933 – such as the Frontier Zone Law, which was depriving Germans of the right of inheritance in a broad border-belt area – that was driving many Germans out of the country."[529]
>
> "From central Poland, which was not affected by the Frontier Zone Law and where the fight of the minority groups was assuming life-threatening proportions only shortly before the outbreak of war…"[530]

A German historian:

> "Meanwhile [after the German-Soviet non-aggression pact], Warsaw was displaying a façade of unperturbed calmness. However, the most savage chauvinists in the country were intensifying their terror, which they had already been perpetrating on members of the German minority for some time; also, Polish anti-aircraft batteries had fired on foreign commercial aircraft.
>
> While the Quai d'Orsay [France], almost fearfully, was urging the Cabinet in Warsaw to take the German rapprochement proposals into consideration, Downing Street [UK] also wished now that the 'Poles would express their readiness for negotiations in concrete terms.'
>
> Warsaw had hitherto not taken any effective measures to contain the bloody excesses of the semi-official patriotic associations, to which already 3,000 to 4,000 members of the German minority had fallen victim. Even now Warsaw did not put a stop to these machinations; rather they tolerated an unrestrained hate campaign in the press."[531]
>
> "So in the end it was what Pilsudski had so appropriately characterised as the thousand year old hostility toward Germany of the Polish nation which, in conjunction with American influences, contributed so decisively to the rejection of Hitler's proposals."[532]

A British publicist, who had still been traveling in Poland during the summer of 1939, noted:

> "One must ask whether it is in keeping with the rights of small nations or nationalities that they should thus be included in States where they are exposed to such treatment. Poland has tried to make the minorities relinquish their language and customs; she has failed, despite more than twenty years of activities such as I have described in this chapter. But the attempts are still going on. One begins to wonder whether the Ukrainians, White Russians and Germans should not also enjoy some protection from England, or must it only be the Poles?"[533]

The first blood that was flowing before the start of the Second World War was the blood of members of the German minority in Poland. In spite of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact and the tension in Polish-Soviet relations, the Poles did not shy away from intensifying the persecution of the Germans and the anti-German campaign in the press. By mid-August, 76,535 Germans had fled to the Reich,[534] but certainly not because Hitler had forced them. The Germans in Poland had 20,000 dead to mourn before and after the start of the clashes, of whom 12,500 could be identified by name.[535] That means that nearly twice as many ethnic Germans were murdered than German soldiers were killed during the entire Poland campaign (10,572). These excesses could not be excused under the pretext that it was the case of the Polish government losing their grip on a "mass-movement" getting out of hand. The Polish leadership had been working systematically for months, yes, even years, toward this very end!

> "The operation against the Germans had been methodically prepared; it had been ordered!
> Not that these victims were put straight before a firing-squad – these massacres of the Germans were never based on any title of law – without cause they were shot, without cause tortured to death, beaten and stabbed and most of them, in addition, were savagely mutilated: these were deliberate murders, mostly committed by Polish soldiers, policemen and gendarmes, as well as by armed civilians, grammar school pupils and apprentices…"[536]

What was (and still is today) the official Polish attitude after the war?

> "The Poles were not sorry for what had been done."[537]

Poland's Foreign Policy on Germany

Strategy

The conception of the state of Poland was shaped from 1919 to 1939 by the same military junta that also created Poland's foreign policy during this

period. Therefore the Polish foreign policy was closely connected with the plans and objectives of Poland's military leaders.

> "He [Pilsudski] was sometimes Prime Minister, always War Minister and always in control of the army, of which he remained Inspector General until his death. His nominees were placed in all the strategic positions of the Polish State, in the army, industry, the banks, and the press. Critics of the regime said with some justification that Poland had been turned into a colony to provide lucrative jobs for former members of the Pilsudski legions."[538]

The structure of the state, merely hinted at with these words, makes it plain that in all of Poland's governmental affairs from 1919-1939 the military were in charge. Their policy of territorial expansion was directed toward

- –the west ("vital, because it would enlarge the basis for raw materials and would secure for Poland the status of a Great Power")[539]
- –the north (because access to the Baltic Sea, including the "Oder territories," the "Corridor," Danzig, East Prussia and large parts of Lithuania would be regarded as the equivalent to the lungs of the Polish state organism)
- –the east (because East Poland that included the Ukraine would be in accordance with the "historical rights of Poland")
- –the south (because that would make possible the "legitimate" border with Hungary).

This objective was to be reflected both in Poland's foreign policy as well as in her strategy. Power displays were to demonstrate the Great Power status to each neighbouring state. The most important Polish author writing on the country's foreign policy from 1935 to 1939, Adolf Bochenski, "advocated a policy of blood," and he "decried any attempts to arrive at understandings with Germany and Russia."[540]

The various plans for attack on Germany produced by Pilsudski, but also by the Foreign Minister, Beck, in the years 1919 to 1939 (three in the year 1933 alone!) are historically indisputable. Even Vansittart, the long-standing highest official at the British Foreign Office, confirmed their authenticity.[541] In fact, one would routinely play down these plans of aggression by such defused propaganda terms as "preventative war plans," but these "preventative war plans" presuppose a prior knowledge of an aggressive intention of the enemy, which Germany during the years 1919-1939 did not harbour. Poland was fully aware that Germany, neither at the time of the Weimar Republic nor in the Third Reich, was contemplating military action

against Poland, indeed for the most time, between 1919 and at least 1937, would not even have been in a position to contemplate such; after all, the German nation was at first still fettered in the chains of Versailles, and Germany seemed to appear, in Warsaw's opinion, totally unprepared for a general war even in 1939. Hence Warsaw's strategy envisaged, from the first day of war onward, to march on Berlin without ever taking into consideration any German defensive measures whatsoever.

Former Chancellor of the Reich and, after the Second World War, pro-Communist politician Dr. Joseph Wirth stated at one of the "Nuremberg war crimes trials":

> "Every German government between 1918 and 1933 and the German High Command were filled with worry for the continued existence of the Reich, which they saw threatened within the sphere of both domestic and foreign policies. Already in the first years straight after the [First] World War, Poland had repeatedly been trying to forcibly partition off territories from the Reich. The fear of further attacks was not altogether unfounded. Polish nationalist circles were demanding further cessions of lands… Yet our German army was only pitifully armed. Chancellor of the Reich, Dr. [Heinrich] Brüning, and the Reichsminister of Defence, Gröner, therefore decided to evacuate Silesia in the event of an attack by Poland. Those who, in view of these facts, still insist that we would have had the intention to take the offensive are to be pitied. In the face of all the provocations by Poland we remained calm and composed. In view of the miserable situation on the German eastern frontiers it is obvious that an improvement in the military-political situation would have been sought. Nothing was further from our thoughts as South German Catholic Democrats than hatred of Poland. Yet we were the ones, my friends and I, who had the bitterest experiences with the Poles."[542]

The former Chancellor of the Reich, Professor Heinrich Brüning, in a letter to Dr. Rudolf Pechel from the year 1947, published in the review *Deutsche Rundschau*:

> "The failure of the League of Nations – neglecting to take action against the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the autumn of 1931 – in connection with a new [Polish] political plan for mobilisation, on which we were informed in the same year by a Foreign Power, increased General von Schleicher's uneasiness more and more. The Polish plan of mobilisation was designed in such a way that there was no doubt whatsoever about the firm intention to take the whole of Silesia in a surprise coup."[543]

From 6 to 15 March 1933 Poland yet again – and not for the last time – massed troops in Posen-West Prussia, so that they could at any moment be used for an advance against Danzig, East Prussia and Silesia, just as Marshal Pilsudski, "already in peacetime, would leave half of his army behind at the German-Polish border."[544] The three German infantry divisions (in Königsberg, Stettin and Berlin) and the two cavalry divisions (in Frankfurt/Oder and Breslau) that were assigned to be the first to go into action at the German-Polish border, were facing five Polish corps composed

of fifteen infantry divisions, as well as several army troops. [544] The Polish deployment and operational plans, which had been worked out already in the year 1923 in collaboration with the French General Staff, were available. Since 1931, periodic "trial mobilisations" were based on these plans[545] that envisaged "offensive action with preventive characteristics." [544] Only the eventual refusal of the French government and "Poland's fear of Soviet intervention" averted the many times planned "preventive war" against Germany.[546] At the time of the Rhineland occupation in 1936, Poland was again on the verge of dealing to Germany a deathblow from the east – in spite of the fact that the German-Polish friendship and Non-Aggression Pact had been in effect for the past two years! The "operational study Germany'" which was – as mentioned previously – founded on "offensive action with preventive characteristics," had been extended since 1938 by more General Staff endeavours with France.[547]

While the "upstart political highwayman"[548] – Hitler – was allegedly busy "conspiring against world peace,"[549] those responsible for the "peace-loving" Polish policy "were penetrated by an illusory optimism which had them believe they would be in Berlin just a few weeks after the outbreak of war."[550] In the spring of 1939 Poland had already issued the call-up for the troops, and by the summer of 1939 she had mobilised so many military units that later on, "at the general mobilisation, the only units affected were those where the individuals could not be reached by public notices."[551] This partial mobilisation was initiated by the Polish Foreign Minister Beck on 23 March 1939 for no reason whatsoever and was thereafter steadily expanded; straight away it brought 334,000 additional soldiers into the ranks and gradually doubled the strength of the standing Polish army. In the course of this mobilisation and the simultaneously distributed plan of operation, the Polish army was deployed all along the German border, where it remained until the outbreak of the war.[552] The plan of operation intended to launch a drive on Berlin directly upon the outbreak of hostilities and, expecting an essentially unhindered advance, was never modified up to the outbreak of war. It is of significance that Hitler was acquainted with it before the outbreak of war.

That this type of strategy was to be taken very seriously should be clear from several indications:

Being aware of how disastrous the repercussions of the Russian mobilisation of 1914 and the Czech mobilisation of 20 May 1938 were on the European nations, one must fully realise the consequences and the responsibility of yet another mobilisation against Germany. Mobilisation means a firm intention for war. To the Polish partial mobilisation of 23 March 1939 was added decisive pressure in the fact that Foreign Minister Beck – and on his instigation on 26 March his Ambassador in Berlin, Lipski – rebuffed the German proposal for negotiations of October 1938 with a threat of war.[553] Hitler was given to understand in rather provocative fashion that further endeavours with regard to Danzig and improved traffic regulations across the "Corridor" would result in a Polish declaration of war. Beck repeated to the German Ambassador, von Moltke, on the evening of 28 March 1939 this threat of war and added that one would "in future hold Germany responsible for every action attempted by the Danzig Senate."[554] This, although Danzig was formally a "Free City"!

On 10 August 1939 Poland stated in a diplomatic note that every further expression of interest by Germany with regard to Danzig would be seen as a cause for war.[555]

On 25 March 1939 the British Ambassador in Warsaw, Kennard, admitted that many foreign diplomats in Warsaw believed that Poland was after provoking a war. Kennard telegraphed to his Foreign Minister word for word:

> "The calling up of reservists has, I believe, gone considerably beyond the numbers mentioned in my telegram No. 79. A competent authority put numbers under arms at 750,000. This, coupled with the precautionary measures mentioned in Danzig telegram No. 7 (not printed), suggests the thought that Mr. Beck intends to start discussions about Danzig at a moment chosen by himself…
>
> I was much struck by statements made both by Mr. Beck and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs (my telegrams…) that the Danzig question must be discussed soon.
>
> I do not share the alarmist views of some of my colleagues that the Polish Government intends to force an issue with Germany."[556]

A few hours later in another telegram:

> "The Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs said that any German ultimatum or any encroachment on the Corridor would of course mean war… Public opinion here at present was bellicose and prepared to support the Government in any defence of vital interests…
>
> He mentioned that he had to attend a discussion on foreign affairs in Parliament yesterday where he had been badly heckled. He felt generally that Mr. Beck was in an extremely difficult position. He had of course to make every effort to avoid a situation which might entail war but, on the other hand, he had to take into consideration the degree of feeling which had been aroused in Poland by recent events on both her southern and northern frontiers."[557]

The German Ambassador in Warsaw reported to Berlin on 28 March 1939:

> "The excitement which has prevailed for some time in Poland has increased considerably. The wildest rumours are current among the population… Of graver significance is the development of a pro-war feeling which is being fostered by the press, by anti-German public demonstrations, especially in the provinces, which have already led to numerous incidents, and partly also by sabre-rattling semi-official propaganda. The bulk of the population today believes that war has become inevitable and imminent.
>
> The practical measures adopted by the government help to aggravate the existing war psychosis.
>
> A frequently reprinted article, entitled 'We are prepared,' which appeared in the military paper *Polska Zbrojna*, is particularly characteristic of the style of the official preparedness propaganda. This article states that the Poles, unlike the Czechs, had no feeling of inferiority as regards the powerful nations of the world. The number of foreign divisions did not frighten the Poles, for their own army, its fine equipment, and the heroic spirit of the Polish nation would be sufficient to assure victory to Poland. Numerous other articles which have since been appearing in the daily press are written in the same spirit.
>
> Given the Polish national character, this self-assurance and over-estimation of their military strength expressed in the press constitute a danger. That this is not merely press propaganda is proved by an authenticated remark made by M. Gluchowski, Vice-Minister for War, in the course of a serious conversation. He stated that Germany's armed forces were one big bluff, for she lacked trained reserves with which to bring her units up to full strength. When asked whether he seriously believed Poland to be superior to Germany from a military point of view, M. Gluchowski answered: 'Why, certainly.'"[558]

Colonel Beck was aware that his military policy as well as the acceptance and reciprocal extension of the British blank check represented a provocation which might lead to an armed conflict with Germany. This intention is shown in the British and American documents on Beck's talks in London in early April 1939, as well as in the extensive diplomatic correspondence, and not least as revealed in the 1939 guidelines as followed by Polish policy.

> "Polish diplomacy in 1938-1939 was a design for disaster.
>
> Beck had now pushed Poland far down the road to war and national destruction. Such a policy pointed directly to disaster."[559]

On 18 May 1939 in Paris, Polish Minister of War General Kasprzycki replied to the French General Staff's question as to whether his fortifications at the German-Polish border would be able to withstand an attack as follows:

> "We do not have any, as we intend to wage mobile warfare and to invade Germany right from the outset of the fighting."[560]

With regard to this probability, France gave her ally the assurance during these General Staff discussions at a military convention that they would overrun Germany's western frontier in a strategic push, at the latest fifteen

days after the outbreak of war. But that was not all. Poland received the disputed Danzig ratification in this wording:

> "In the event of a German attack on Poland or in the event of Poland's vital interests in Danzig being threatened so as to provoke armed action by Poland, the French army will automatically go into action with her various units." [560]

That the French pledge was also contemplated with the ulterior motive of now firmly committing Poland to the concept of the Western Powers cannot be denied.

> "But this [promise by France within the framework of the military convention] was just words, designed to discourage any talks between Poland and Germany."[561]

If a disinterested person could judge like this in retrospect, so doubtless could the French Foreign Minister at that time, with the view or rather the advice of his Ambassador Noël still ringing in his ears, which had been transmitted from Warsaw on 31 May 1938:

> "To dissolve the French-Polish alliance would amount, without any advantage and equivalent whatsoever, to surely driving this country, for a very long time to come, into the arms of Germany…
>
> It would mean relinquishing that which could, in spite of everything else, be in certain instances a decisive trump card in our game. At the same time, Rumania would be removed from our alliance system completely as a counter-reaction. The geographical position of Poland, the liking that most of the Poles have for France, their military traditions, are just so many reasons that should spur us on to save what can still be saved of the alliance. That would make it more difficult for Poland to get closer to the Reich so as to submit completely. Then we shall have less trouble, when circumstances become more favourable, to lead Poland back to our views."[562]

On 20 July 1939, the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish army, Marshal Rydz-Śmigły, stated in an official communiqué of the Polish telegraph agency:

> "Danzig is essential to Poland. Whoever controls Danzig controls our economic life…
>
> An occupation of Danzig by Germany would remind us of the partitions of Poland. For this reason I ordered a mobilisation four months ago when the German Chancellor renewed his demands concerning Danzig and Pomorze [*i.e.* the Corridor]. Please believe me when I say that this mobilisation was no mere demonstration. We were ready for war then in case of necessity... even should she [Poland] have to fight alone and without allies."[563]

The deluded confidence of the Polish leadership to be standing in Berlin after just a few days into the war is frequently confirmed:

> "The national holiday [in Warsaw] was celebrated with a big military parade, and the fanatical masses were hailing each new military unit parading past, chanting in chorus:
>
> 'Let's go to Danzig!'
>
> 'On to Berlin!'
>
> The speakers at the meetings often declare openly that the German demands for an interconnecting link with East Prussia and the return of Danzig to East Prussia would have to be answered with war. The ridiculous German army made up of the underfed generation of the Versailles Treaty, with their stupid cardboard dummy tanks, would be totally thrashed in Berlin.

The German army – so one of the speaker's play on words goes – would be utterly destroyed in Berlin-Grunewald, just as the army of the Teutonic Knights was defeated in 1410 near Grunwald."[564]

On 15 August 1939 the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Lukasiewicz, declared to the French Foreign Minister Bonnet:

"It will be the Polish army that will be invading Germany on the first day of war."[565]

On 26 August 1939 the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow, Joseph E. Davies, wrote:

"One of the most prominent officials under Beck, Minister…, stated to me, positively, that his government would not tolerate proposals that Poland and Germany should get together and compose their difficulties over the Corridor and Danzig…

He expressed himself as being disgusted with what he called the common exaggeration of Germany's military power. His government, he said, would show them up to the world; within three weeks after the outbreak of war Polish troops would be in Berlin; the 'West Wall' or 'Siegfried Line' was nothing but a 'cotton line.' Poland did not need Russian aid; they could handle the Germans alone and easily."[566]

The same was heard from the Polish Ambassador in Berlin, Lipski, on 31 August 1939 to the Councillor of legation at the British Embassy in Berlin, Ogilvie-Forbes:

"He [Lipski] stated that he was convinced that unrest would break out in Germany in the event of war and that the Polish army would successfully march on Berlin."[567]

"…this plan [Hitler's proposal of 29 August 1939] was a breach of Polish sovereignty and was quite out of the question. He had had many years experience of Germany. He would stake his reputation in his conviction that German morale was breaking and that the present regime would soon crack… This German offer was a trap. It was also a sign of weakness on the part of the Germans which was confirmed by the ambassador's appreciation of the situation."[568]

Such an attitude – which was maintained by the Poles even after the conclusion of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact – could not fail to have certain consequences, especially since Polish foreign policy was aligned with such delusions.

"There are several reasons for the achievement of the German victorious campaign ['the 18-days-campaign'], and nowadays one usually tends to conceal the first reason. This involved the planning by the Polish leadership. The main body of the Polish army was standing by not to defend but rather to attack. True to the slogans of the pre-war weeks: ready for attacking East Prussia. This attack involved the fact that the Polish government was relying on the guarantee promise of the Western Powers and, therefore, was expecting an attack on the western frontiers of Germany to hold down the Reich's main forces there. But the Western Powers did not attack, and so the German Wehrmacht in almost their entirety could be brought into action against Poland. The other reasons were the totally novel strategy of the German Wehrmacht and the modern weaponry on which this strategy was based."[569]

These facts were withheld at the Allied Nuremberg trials of the so-called "war criminals." The victor was not interested in fitting these facts into the

mosaic of the interconnected events on the eve of the Second World War, or rather, on the eve of the German-Polish conflict. The historian, on the other hand, must reflect upon them all in his assessment!

From "Munich" to the Outbreak of War

The foreign policy of Poland 1938-1939 was the same as her conception of the State and her strategy. Toward the end of 1938, Poland removed herself from the position of being "prepared to co-operate with the Hitler-Reich."[570] A steadily worsening crisis, whose peaceable settlement through negotiations was refused by Poland, was the consequence. Given this basic position, the German suggestions for negotiations, even the one of 29 August 1939, which basically went no further than that of 24 October 1938,[571] were really proposals for calling an armistice, because:

> "A state of half-war amounting to a kind of armistice had existed in Europe since March [1939], and by July we were drifting rapidly towards war."[572]

In October 1938, Polish Foreign Minister Beck had shown himself willing to negotiate with Hitler about Danzig and about improving the connection between Berlin and Königsberg.[573] Nevertheless, he deliberately delayed the start of these unwelcome negotiations, for he wished to wait and see with regards to the British armament and wanted to thwart an international conference. The fact that as yet no alliance with Britain had been realised was not a reason for Beck to withdraw from negotiations with the Reich. Not only that, but even before Britain gave her unconditional guarantee on 31 March 1939, Beck was challenging Germany with his threat of war, the partial mobilisation, the plans for an offensive, the renewed intensified pressure on the German minority and the announcement that Germany in future would be held fully responsible for every action taken by the Danzig Senate (23, 26 and 28 March 1939, respectively), so that he could demonstrate his independent Great-Power-policy. Of course, already since August and also September 1938 Beck had the assurance 'in the bag' that Great Britain would support Poland "as much as possible" at Danzig.[574] Since the end of 1938, there was also evidence for an unrestricted sympathy for Poland from the U.S. government, whose diplomats "also probably influenced" Poland.[575] The rejection of the

German negotiation proposal of 26 March 1939 was deliberately provocative, since there was no cause whatsoever for answering this with threats of war, mobilisation, aggravated minority policies, with the "awakening of the anti-German mood among the Polish people of every social strata and circle"[576] and, lastly, to underline it with the acceptance of a British carte-blanche.

The assertion that Hitler's entry into Prague on 15 March 1939 was responsible for this response is demonstrably false. The Polish leadership, "the only one not to have issued a formal protest against the annexation" of Czechia, [576] did not consider the establishment of the protectorate – done with the approval of the Czech government! – as being a threat to Poland. Indeed, they were the ones who had never believed in the viability of Czecho-Slovakia and, in addition, it was they who were working toward the further partitioning of this State with their territorial claims and ultimata after the Munich conference, and who were defending a common border with Hungary.[577] Already on 27 October 1938 the German Ambassador in Warsaw, von Moltke, had informed the Foreign Minister of the Reich:

> "As I have already stated in report PV 47 of 14 October 1938, Poland is trying to induce Slovakia to break away from the political union in which she has been joined until now."[578]

Foreign Minister Beck expressed satisfaction with the eventual independence obtained by Slovakia and announced his recognition of this country under national law already on 15 March 1939.[579]

Therefore, when adopting her measures against Germany on 26 March 1939, Poland did not even refer to Germany's actions with regard to Prague; to do so would have meant a *realistic* assessment of German power, which did not exist in Poland right up to the outbreak of war. The Polish leadership, on the contrary, was citing time and time again Hitler's desire for peace, Hitler's perception of the Bolshevik danger and Hitler's military weakness as so many reasons why their provocations bore no risk whatsoever. During a conversation with Rumanian Foreign Minister Gafencu in March 1939, Beck stated:

> "Unlike all his predecessors, Hitler is aware of the reality of the Bolshevik danger. He has always been fighting it. I know that precisely this is for Hitler's new Germany the pivotal, the principal and the decisive problem, besides which all other problems pale into insignificance. How then does it follow from this for Germany to be interested in fighting against Poland? Once the Polish bastion falls, then the gateway of Europe will be open to Soviet expansion. Is this supposed to be what Hitler wants? I know that he does not! Of course he wants Danzig back, but he would not be prepared to pay such a price in order to gain the Free City."[580]

Beck's intention in the negotiations with Ribbentrop from October 1938 onward were to hold out hopes for a review more along the lines of the German proposals and yet refrain absolutely from making any concessions. This stance, which eventually reached a temporary climax with the threat of war, the mobilisation, the heightened pressure on the minorities and with the acceptance of the British blank check in March 1939, had just as little to do with the subject matter of the German proposals as it did with the German handling of the negotiations or indeed with German policy as such. Even the *Polish White Book* on the immediate pre-war period confirms this:

> "The Polish government, like the Governments of the other States who, down till 1938 inclusive, were prepared to co-operate with the Hitler Reich, acted on the assumption that they must neglect nothing which might preserve Europe from war."[581]

This statement establishes unequivocally that Poland and England changed their attitude toward Germany at the end of 1938; they declined – to put it mildly, as in the words of this Polish statement – from this time on any further collaboration with the German Reich and accepted "oversights and neglects" in the peace efforts, insofar as these "neglects" were to have been their new foreign policy baseline! The result, in any case, was that "many foreign diplomats in Warsaw see that public opinion here at present is bellicose and believe that the Polish Government intends to force an issue with Germany."[582] Already on 16 March 1939 the French Ambassador in Warsaw, Noël, reported to his Foreign Minister:

> "On the other hand, nobody could fail to notice the increase of anti-German sentiment amongst Poles of the most diverse social classes and circles of society."[583]

Beck accepted the British blank check on 31 March 1939 and on 5 April 1939 made a reciprocal offer of help to Great Britain, irrespective of whatever action Great Britain – apart from an attack on the British Isles – was to regard as a threat to her vital interests and to which she would respond with military measures. What had induced the Polish Foreign Minister to go down this foolhardy road, when he, for his part, had rejected London's demands: the collaboration with the USSR, the accepting of Soviet arms for the eventuality of a war, the conclusion of a military alliance with Rumania against Germany and Hungary?

Beck had come to realise

> "that the method by which Britain had handled this matter had made it three times easier to get Poland to agree to almost anything Britain wanted."[584]

Beck knew that Hitler had not threatened him and "did not believe that Germany had any offensive intentions."[585] Beck assumed that Hitler was not going to threaten Poland in future either, as he

> "basically was a timid Austrian who would not risk war against a determined and strong opponent." [584]

Beck stressed in his London talks from 4-6 April 1939 that there was "a kind of a lull at the moment," since "after the recent events the German government must have been taken back by the reaction that they had created in the world"[586] (*i.e.* the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia on 15 March 1939). Beck knew that his policy must "make Hitler and all his chiefs furious." He was nonetheless counting on Hitler dispatching "with all the tokens of friendliness" his Foreign Minister to Warsaw, whom only recently Beck had chosen to portray as a "dangerous fool." Given the prevailing situation, Beck was convinced that he himself could then decide "the limits of the negotiations" or when to trigger the war that "would have Germany founder." Beck was

> "more than happy to have England's support given in the way that it was, *i.e.* that Poland is the one to determine when England is to come to her rescue."[587]

The fears already expressed by the British Ambassador in Warsaw on 5 October 1938

> "that recent events will encourage him [Beck] still further to ignore any pressure or advice from us,"[588]

were to become increasingly true. In Beck's view, the impetus behind the political development of Europe ought to be given to Poland, as befitting a European Great Power. Beck wanted to dictate the conditions, and he was not sparing in his threats of war already at the time before the British guarantee. This man with "the less statesmanlike aspects of his character, including his personal ambition and vanity,"[589] who believed "that Poland had nothing to lose by the threat of direct action,"[590] had found the partner who, without any scruples, gave him free rein to pursue this course!

Plainly, this was incitement to war, which did not even have to use the arguments of an "aggressive" or "lusting after world domination" or, in general, the "war-willing" Hitler. Quite the opposite. Beck started from the assumption that Hitler did not want war, that he could not even afford a war and, for this reason, would swallow provocations of the most evil kind from the "determined" and willing-to-fight Poland and still have to dispatch

"with all the tokens of friendliness" his Foreign Minister to Warsaw! Britain, having full knowledge of the underlying motives and the balance of power, was lending a helping hand in this undertaking already many months before the continually intensifying German-Polish tension reached the climax. It represents a singularly unparalleled cynicism to then speak, after the outbreak of war, of "protection of the smaller nations," of Christianity and of the "obligation of the alliance in fighting the aggressor threatening Europe and the world."

The unceasing British encouragement, already before the guarantee, was even recognised by Polish diplomats as a resolution for war:

> "It is childishly naive, and at the same time unfair, to propose to a nation which is in such a position as Poland that she should compromise her relations with so powerful a neighbour as Germany and to expose the world to the catastrophe of a new war, only for the gratification of Mr. Chamberlain's internal policies. It would be still more naive of them to presume that the Polish Government did not understand the real meaning of this manoeuver and its consequences."[591]

This serious charge was made by the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Lukasiewicz, on 29 March 1939 in a report to his Minister for Foreign Affairs. This statement, which is not the only one,[592] is an unmistakable proof that Poland had been encouraged, already before Britain's *carte blanche*, to compromise her relations with Germany and to unleash a war. The Polish government quickly became expert at this language.

> "Straight after the British guarantee declaration, which was followed immediately by the French guarantee, there began in Poland a malicious anti-German rabble-rousing… Demands for the occupation of the city of Danzig appear in Polish newspapers.
>
> So it continues. The Polish army is to march into East Prussia and to annex this part of Germany. Other papers claim even more: the borders of Poland have to be pushed forward to the Oder. At public meetings, there are demands made which border on lunacy. Not the Oder but the Elbe is Poland's Western border. Berlin is not a German city, but an ancient Slavic one, an ancient Polish settlement! Poland starts off with partial mobilisation; large posters appear on the walls of houses: 'Let's go to Berlin!'"[593]

Beck carried on compromising himself: In his note of 26 March 1939 to the Reich Foreign Minister he had described any further handling of the German matters of concern in Danzig as a reason for war, and at the beginning of April he communicated this to his interlocutors in London.[594] On 20 April 1939, Beck ascertained in his briefings to the Polish diplomats abroad that, although by now the reciprocal British-Polish guarantee had come into force, "no sign of any haste on the part of Germany" was in evidence, although a "new wave of rumours"[595] had been noticed. On 5 May 1939, thus only a few days later, Beck gave a speech in the Polish

parliament which – as it was dishonest and was misrepresenting the actual state of affairs – was bound to appear like an outright declaration of war. With this talk he ultimately rejected any agreement, in whatever form. Beck's utterance, "We in Poland do not recognise the conception of 'peace at any price,'" could hardly have been more cynical and war-minded, given the recent German-Polish negotiations and the German willingness to reach a peaceful compromise. Apart from the untrue assertion that Germany was only making demands without giving anything in return, there is also the following characteristic portrayal of Beck's aggressive posturing, albeit historically untrue:

> "I insist on the term 'province of Pomorze.' The word 'Corridor' is an artificial invention, for this is an ancient Polish territory with an insignificant percentage of German colonists."[596]

Polish public opinion reacted to this speech with enthusiasm. Beck received a whole pile of congratulatory telegrams. He was fully aware, as was the Polish military, of the course of direction that this speech was unequivocally announcing:

> "that two relatively poor countries, Germany and Poland, should fight one another – a development which, after all, could be in the interest of the rich countries alone."[597]
>
> "When in the spring of 1939 the policy of settlement with Germany that he [Beck] stood for collapsed, Beck nevertheless remained in office, and he experienced his biggest popularity among the Polish people just at that moment when, in his speech of 5 May 1939, he dealt the final blow to his previous policy."[598]

The unconditional guarantee given by Great Britain had "blinded the Polish leadership to the practical advantages of an understanding with Germany." Hitler had never put any pressure on Poland, nor hinted at such, had not set any deadlines and did not make any unreasonable demands. Hitler's policy at that time could be likened to a kind of "lull," according to Beck's own statement in London. Yet the Polish Foreign Minister placed himself at the head of the anti-German and war-eager Polish public, dispatched inflammatory and false rumours to other countries,[599] and he did nothing to prevent or to restrict the excesses of his fellow-countrymen.

> "The outbreak of war on 1 September 1939 is now seen in Poland as a totally undeservedly endured attack by the powerful German neighbour, like a bolt out of the blue, as it were, falling on an unsuspecting land, forgetting completely, however, that since March of that year Poland had been in a state of a continually rising warlike atmosphere, that in the numerous articles and letters from readers appearing in newspapers war was strongly desired, that owing to certain actions, such as the volunteering for a commando unit of 'human torpedoes' (after a misunderstood Japanese model) and talks given by Polish officers praising the qualities of the Polish soldiers to the sky while defining the German equipment as inferior, the belief in an assured victory was created, with dreams of a quick march on Berlin."[600]

Nothing remotely similar would have been found in Germany in 1939! There was not one German politician, not one German diplomat, not one German general, not one German publicist who considered the question of "war or peace" as unimportant. To the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Lukasiewicz, however – and to Polish diplomacy in general – this question was one of indifference. The French Foreign Minister, Bonnet, came to realise this when he was trying to explain to Lukasiewicz the significance of the British-French-Soviet military talks.[601]

> "We are not afraid of anything. Russia will not let Germany touch us; Germany will prevent Russia from doing us any harm."[602]

At the conference of 24 March 1939, attended by the Foreign Minister, the outline of Polish foreign policy was established, whereby, if the "perimeter of our direct interests and our normal needs" was to be impaired, "we will fight."[603]

This denial of any fear whatsoever, already apparent in early 1937 in remarks made by the then Polish President, Ignacy Mościcki, was to acquire aggressive undertones in 1939 to such a point that the Polish leadership showed scant regard for "world opinion," while they demonstrated their intended aggressive goals. Even the few well-meaning pieces of advice proffered from a friendly side were arrogantly rebuffed during the last days and hours before the outbreak of war.

So not without reason was a telegram sent on 2 April 1939 (shortly before Beck's visit to London) by the British Ambassador in Warsaw to his Foreign Minister:

> "The chief difficulty is that the Polish Government has hitherto failed to educate public opinion on the lines that any concessions are necessary."[604]

Nevertheless, no conclusions were drawn from this in London for the preservation of peace.

On 17 May 1939, the representatives of France and Poland concluded a military agreement by which the French General Staff committed themselves to break through the "Siegfried Line" on the fifteenth day after the outbreak of war. With this, the Polish aspiration "for a mobile campaign with the invasion of Germany and the advance on Berlin"[605] was brought closer to complete fulfilment. The French Foreign Minister, Bonnet, also came to realise the Polish intentions the day that the Polish Ambassador, Lukasiewicz, had urged him to incorporate the secret clause – that "Danzig

is of vital importance to Poland" – into the agreement that was to be concluded. Bonnet wrote about this in his memoirs:

> "It seemed to me that Beck's subtle game was to exploit the French-British alliance by forcing from one of us, with the help of the other, ever more extensive and more precise obligations."[606]

The crisis was approaching a climax, and yet the Polish government refused to discuss a settlement:

> "The Poles faced the approaching crisis imperturbably, confident that Hitler would be exposed as an aggressor and that the justified grievances of Danzig would then be forgotten."[607]

On 13 June 1939, the British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, recommended that Poland should

> "… talk a little less about her bravery and think a little more about the realities of her geographical position."[608]

The High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt, wrote on 26 July 1939 to the General Secretary of the League, Joseph Avenol:

> "A dangerous mood is beginning to emerge among the Poles. Frequently it has been admitted or, even worse, openly stated that a general war would mean the only salvation for the Republic. What is particularly dangerous is that people have begun to get used to the idea that a catastrophe is inevitable; exaggerated statements are made, and the end result is a kind of emotional poisoning in this unfortunate city. There was arriving a stream of camp followers as the bringers of bad tidings and an omen of foreboding who frequently were only interested in intensifying the crisis, either by personal interventions in the localised quarrel or by fanciful reports."[609]

Needless to say that England was already fully aware of this development. After the British Cabinet had drawn up a statement on the British policy with regard to Poland, which was to be announced by Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons,

> "Beck asked Halifax [on 5 July] to omit the compromising phrase in which he said that the Polish Government 'would approach such conversations (with Germany) objectively but with good will.' The phrase was omitted when Chamberlain spoke in the Commons on July 10."[610]

A travel report that was written by two British diplomats on 9 June 1939 to be presented to their then Foreign Minister, Lord Halifax, was made available to the public by the Foreign Office after forty years. The writers were Sir William Strang, at the time head of department dealing with Germany and Eastern Europe at the Foreign Office in London, and Gladwyn Jebb, private Secretary to the Permanent Undersecretary of State, also at the British Foreign Office. Although the report was drawn up by the lower ranking Jebb and then approved by Strang, the observations recorded in it nevertheless represented a combined contribution. The title of the

account is “Visit of Mr. Strang and Mr. Jebb to Poland” and is initialled with the date of 13 June 1939 by Kirkpatrick, the official in charge of such matters. Gladwyn Jebb wrote:

> “What struck me most was the apparent calm and confidence of the Poles with whom I talked. I think some were over-confident and ignorant of the very real dangers of an attack by the disciplined and mechanised German divisions. H.M. Vice-Consul at Kattowitz, for instance, told me that the local Polish officials had been ‘terribly uppish’ since our guarantee, and were talking of a quick defeat of Germany and an occupation of Breslau. Again, the peasants on an estate south of Thorn, where I spent a most refreshing week-end, were (I was assured by the son of the house) longing to have a go at the Germans. This was confirmed by the highly intelligent head of the Economics Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Wszelaki, who said that the bellicosity and anti-Germanism of the peasants were due partly to racial and partly to economic reasons (increase in population, and consequent hunger for the German farmers’ land). Wszelaki, indeed, went so far as to say that, if war broke out, he feared that a terrible massacre of the German-Polish peasants might be difficult to prevent. Further, it seems that the Polish peasants, while remaining anti-Russian, are now less conscious of the Russian danger. My friends were not disposed to say that this would result in any return of pan-Slavism, but they admitted that in the long run, and in the face of continued German pressure, something of the kind might result. ...
>
> I cannot, of course, profess to know what the Polish Military are thinking. All I can say is that the Colonel to whom I sat next at dinner – principal assistant to General Stachiewitz, the Chief of the General Staff – was an intelligent and reasonable man. He admitted freely that the Polish army was deficient in some respects, but was confident that, if necessary, they would acquit themselves very well. Partly from him and partly from other persons I gathered that the idea was to attack East Prussia at the outset of war, since the Germans would find it very difficult to reinforce this province quickly and adequately. Moreover, it was capable of being attacked from many points simultaneously. The booster effect of an occupation of Königsberg might, it was hoped, counterbalance an inevitable retreat from the Western salient. In any case, Poland would not necessarily be defeated even if she withdrew to the line of the Vistula. And by the time the Polish armies were back there, the Germans, as well as the Poles, might well be running short of certain essential supplies. Emphasis tended to be laid on the probability of a war in the East being an ‘open’ war with freedom of manoeuvre and that this might tend, in the early stages at least, to favour the Poles.
>
> In order to draw my Polish friends, I usually at a certain stage asked them what they proposed to do with the Germans when the fortune of war had – as they believed was probable – decided in their favour. No two persons gave the same answer to this awkward question. But the general line seemed to be that Germany ought to be carved up into two or more pieces and that the larger section should be composed of a Southern and Catholic bloc, perhaps under the Archduke Otto [von Habsburg]. In any case, there seemed to be a general idea that East Prussia should be annexed by Poland. The second-in-command of the Eastern section of the Foreign Office went indeed so far as to say definitely that this was the Polish plan. He justified it on the grounds that the population of East Prussia was declining; that much of it was really Polish anyhow; that in any case population transfers could be arranged; and that Poland as a young and rapidly increasing State ought to have a coast-line commensurate with her national importance.
>
> But there is, unless I am wrong, a still larger and more shadowy project in existence for Poland’s future after ‘a victorious war against Germany.’ This is the conception of a federal Poland, including Lithuania, with some form of autonomy for the Ruthenians. Warsaw, in accordance with this dream, would be the centre of a huge agglomeration, the western frontiers of which might be extended almost to the Oder, and the southern march with a reconstituted Hungary. ...
>
> There are few Poles in authority, I think, who are unconscious of the very real dangers of a war with Germany, and many seem to realise that this might in fact mean a steady retreat into the interior of the country, which might quite well not be counterbalanced by the occupation of East

Prussia, where the standing defences (apart from the present reinforcement difficulty) are very strong. Their belief, however, is that in the general war which they believe would follow a German attack on Poland, Germany would be defeated in the end, and that the Polish Army, even if badly mauled, would then re-emerge from the Pripet marshes or the 'Jungle' of Bialowieza and proceed to occupy Greater Poland in much the same circumstances as in 1919. Nor is this belief in any way pathetic or fantastic. Poles point out, I think with justice, that the German situation, whether military, internal or economic, is far less strong than the German propaganda machine would have us believe. They hold that some form of German collapse within a year of the outbreak of a general war is a very real possibility; and while they have no doubt that the Germans will fight extremely well in the initial stages, they are confident that the ring will hold and that the effect of a blockade will be noticeable far sooner than it was in 1914-18..."[611]

The British government had accepted and was resigned to the situation of Poland not wanting to negotiate. Result: more war cries in Poland. Marian Chodacki, the Polish Commissioner General in Danzig, was the man who was representing Polish policy at the centre of German-Polish relations and who spoke repeatedly about war,[612] as, for instance, at the time when Danzig would not let its population be starved out because the very livelihood of the Germans was threatened with ruin as a result of the pressure exerted by Poland and when, instead, Danzig wanted to open the border with East Prussia.

On 10 August, the heavily government-controlled *Kurier Polski* wrote:

"Just as Carthage had to be destroyed 2,000 years ago, today more and more voices are heard calling to put an end, once and for all, to Germany's craving for power over the other nations in Europe. ... Ever more widespread was the general opinion in the land that 'Carthage' must be destroyed. The time is fast approaching when it will be universally held that the removal of the festering sore in the centre of Europe is a necessity. All that will be left of Germany, then, will be only a heap of ruins."[613]

This demand was not an isolated occurrence in the Polish pre-war press; rather, it was the basic tenor of a strongly government-controlled journalism. When, in addition to this, noted spokesmen of this State were whipping up the people with unceasing warmongering speeches and were openly proclaiming their annexationist goals, then this had to be considered as a policy of war. [613] The one who finally started the military advance by giving the order first – Germany – is not the one that can be branded as guilty for the war, but rather it is the one who, over a long period, has so geared her whole policy as to force the opponent into military intervention, and who has already in the interior of the country turned the war-like hostilities against her foreign minorities into a permanent state of affairs!

Carl J. Burckhardt, the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, had stated in a report of 20 December 1938:

"The Poles have a bit of a mad streak. At midnight they start smashing their glasses. They are the only unhappy people in Europe longing for the battlefield. They are thirsting for glory, and in that they know no bounds.

There is Mr. Beck, but there is also the army and a public opinion ready to explode at any moment."[614]

Roger Makins, British delegate of the League in Basel, reported on 11 June 1939 about a conversation with Burckhardt:

"Mr. Burckhardt detected certain symptoms of Polish imperialism, and formed the impression that ultimate Polish aims were of wide scope."[615]

The French Ambassador in Berlin, Coulondre:

"Their only salvation [of Poland and of Rumania] lay in preserving the peace, but they made no move in the direction that would have been necessary for it."[616]

The following quotes are from historians well-known for their antagonism to Hitler:

"The history of Poland in the last few years before the Second World War is a history of heroism and folly.

Also, increasingly Poland succumbed to an anti-German fervour.

But still, it can hardly be denied that in every clash the Poles were always adopting the fiercest reaction possible – apart from war."[617]

"By over-estimating her strength, Poland did not explore every avenue that would avoid any violent confrontations."[618]

"And Poland? In Poland, the fatal pact [with Britain] did not seem to make any impression whatsoever. Poland persisted in defiant refusal [of talks with Germany], and the press was positively falling over themselves in expressing their appetite for war and German-hating. For example, an article appearing in those days in a West Polish newspaper was comparing the forthcoming war to a football match. Sneeringly the German team was challenged. They were going to see what fighting meant to the Poles. Then the Danzigers could watch their compatriots getting thrashed. The arresting of Germans continued; no information was given as to their whereabouts. There is no other way of saying it: Poland did everything to provoke their neighbour to the limit, and thereby strengthen the will of their neighbour to war.

The most preposterous was a postcard depicting how the western border of Poland in actual fact should have been running. It was running along the Oder and the Neisse. Such arrogance had to be taken as a direct threat of war on the German side. Amongst the Germans in Poland it provoked only ridicule. Who could take this seriously? Who could have foreseen at that time that one day this border would become reality?"[619]

The Polish leadership would take the initiative for constantly aggravating the crisis in every conceivable sphere: in their foreign policy, with the mobilisation, the military agreements with France, in the displacement of the minorities, in the communications sector including propaganda on radio and on billboards, in their literature, in the public appearance of leading speakers, in the actions taken against Danzig, in the diplomatic snubbing of the German neighbour, in the increasingly frequent border violations (the *Ilustrowany Kurjer* of 7 August 1939 even featured an article about a

competition among Polish military units of destroying and seizing Wehrmacht equipment on the other side of the border),[620] in putting the troops on stand-by for attack, with official threats of war, in the order to Ambassador Lipski, issued at the height of the crisis, "not to let himself get involved in any pertinent talks," and in the general mobilisation which had already been announced the day before. The firing on the undefended German town of Beuthen with artillery during the night from 31 August to 1 September was as characteristic in this chain of events as was the incident of the sudden attack on the transmitting station in Gleiwitz, although not a deciding factor. By the time of these lastly mentioned two incidents the die had already been cast.

> "In large sections of the Polish population there prevailed a confident war mood. Poland did not even attempt to gain time."[621]

The Polish Course of Action against Danzig

The Polish course of action against Danzig and their conduct in the last days of peace merit a separate account; yet this will merely complement and confirm the whole attitude of Polish foreign policy in the year 1939 against Germany.

> "Poland's constant efforts of trying to extend her authority in the Free City of Danzig, with the ultimate aim of revoking its autonomy, led to continual conflicts."[622]

These "constant efforts" go back to the year 1919, and they are a part of the territorial demands made by Poland. These were continuously intensified during the year 1939. According to a statement from the Polish Commissioner General in Danzig, Chodacki, "fifteen one thousand page volumes would be required to describe the Danzig-Polish disputes" in the year 1939.[623] Danzig, a city undisputedly described as German also by the Polish government was, indeed, formally changed by the Versailles "treaty" into a "Free City," but in reality little remained of this "freedom." These rights, which Poland had received ever since 1919 in Danzig, were so extensive that Warsaw exercised a decisive influence on the economy and thus on the political fate of the city: Poland represented Danzig abroad, consequently also in the League of Nations. Poland was represented in Danzig by an ambassador, Germany and other states by a consul at best. Poland controlled Danzig's border including the one with East Prussia and

also determined the customs tariffs according to her own discretion. Poland was maintaining twenty-three authorities besides her own post office. Poland administered the Danzig railways and was responsible for the "national defence" of Danzig. Poland was keeping on the Westerplatte, within the "Free City," a military contingent and a munitions store.

The League of Nations, "protector" of the "Free City" and its constitution, authorised a High Commissioner, elected for a three-year term, who was to prevent outside encroachments and internal unrest or rather, to have these settled. Since their endeavours at mediation between Poland and Danzig, more often than not, broke down, it was left to the Council of the League in Geneva, as the highest judicial authority, to deal with Danzig matters at nearly all its sittings. But this Council of the League neither possessed an explicit authority nor did it have the necessary power to carry through a constructive solution. In the summer of 1936 it created a so-called "Committee of Three" whose members were the Foreign Ministers of England, France and Portugal (later of Sweden). Poland was, as "representative for the foreign affairs of the Free City," also a member of this Committee. The attitude of the Polish representative led to a paradoxical situation already at that time:

> "The roles of the League of Nations and that of Poland appeared to be reversed."[624]

This Committee of Three was to take over from the Council of the League all of the Danzig issues. The reality was that, with the formation of this committee, England and France became more heavily involved in Danzig than they had been before. Henceforth, the official channels for the High Commissioner of the League ran directly to and from London and Paris. This arrangement was unsatisfactory for all concerned. It is not surprising, therefore, that the High Commissioners of the League in Danzig, without exception, were arguing for a readjustment of the local situation. By this they understood the re-integration of Danzig into Germany, especially since the Polish pretext of needing a port had been rendered invalid with the building and extension of Gdingen to the west, with the economic strangling of Danzig and, furthermore, with the securing of a free port area for Poland in Danzig. Count Manfredo Gravina, High Commissioner of the League from 1929 to 1932, had proposed during his term of office:

–to link East Prussia to the Reich by extending the Danzig territory to the west;
–to empower the League of Nations, as the protector of Danzig, with the necessary authority;
–to free Danzig from all restrictions imposed by Poland (railway, customs, economy, foreign policy, etc.);
–to transfer Gdingen and the surrounding region, as well as a free port area in Danzig, to Poland and to secure this arrangement with a guarantee from the League of Nations. [624]

C. J. Burckhardt had also described in the year 1937 and later on the return of Danzig to Germany as imperative.[625] But he too had to realise that he was powerless to change the situation, and he was to admit that it had even been put to him privately from a not unauthoritative party to dispense with his attempts of appeasement in Danzig, as these were regarded as "harmful."[626] Since 1935, when the Under State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, Count Szembek, made this entry in his diary:

> "It would be in the interest of many people to see a worsening in the Polish-Danzig relations, Polish nationalists as well as Danzig Germans hostile to Hitler, Jews and business men from the port of Gdingen…,"[627]

the same groups have remained continuously active in the sense as described by Szembeck.

The proposal by Hitler made to Poland on 24 October 1938 was considerably more modest than any of the previous Danzig demands from German and even foreign politicians. It was conveyed – and this is confirmed by all the subsequently collected documents! – with the sincere intention of placing relations with Germany's eastern neighbour on a better and more secure footing. Hitler did neither threaten nor did he even faintly hint at coercion as a means for achieving his goals. There was no question of any deadline either. On the contrary, right up to the outbreak of war, Hitler repeatedly urged moderation on the Danzig Senate, while nevertheless making it quite clear that Danzig had the protective support of the Reich.[628]

It is a provable fact that Hitler intervened in the Danzig happenings only after the Polish ultimatum of 4 August 1939. This he did by

a. summoning *Gauleiter* Forster (the District head) to Berchtesgaden to make a report (10 August 1939), and he ordered to "avoid any

fresh incident in Danzig so as not to aggravate matters there";[629]

b. asking Carl Burckhardt, the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, for mediation;
c. advising Poland that Germany would not be tolerating to have Danzig subjected to starvation or military occupation. This reaction was declared an "act of aggression" in a Polish statement from 10 August 1939, should it be to the detriment of Polish interests.[630]

"Hitler was not opposed to any of Poland's further economic aspirations at Danzig, but he was resolved never to permit the establishment of a Polish political regime at Danzig."[631]

"The Sudeten Nazis, like the Austrians before them, built up the tension gradually without guidance from Hitler. In Danzig the tension was already complete; and Hitler, so far as he did anything, held the local Nazis back."[632]

The Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, on the other hand, was pursuing his policy in Danzig "not for Danzig as such, but out of principle – Danzig has become a kind of symbol."[633]

But what did this "policy of principle" that Poland followed in Danzig look like? Such is the opinion of the German Ambassador in Paris, Otto Abetz:

"The proposition of a 'spontaneous' awakening of Polish nationalism after Munich does not bear close examination. The anti-German demonstrations demanding the Polish annexation of Danzig and East Prussia were taking place in by far too many and too thinly spread places, the boycott of German-speaking businesses was too well synchronised, the stone throwing at windows of the German embassy in Warsaw and the German consulate general in Thorn was happening too close together in time for any spontaneity to have been likely."[634]

With the backing from Great Britain, Warsaw was forcefully driving forward her Polonising campaign against Danzig. The initiative for aggravating matters lay, as so often since 1919, solely with Poland – and England was leading Poland "far up the garden path."[635]

After the defeat of Poland in 1939, Foreign Minister Beck told a friend in his Rumanian exile:

"No one in his right mind can claim that Danzig was the cause of the war."[636]

The fact remains, though, that

"… he certainly had behaved in the critical months of 1939 as if Danzig were really the issue." [636]

The most significant of these measures: At the end of 1938, Poland was issuing stamps which represented Danzig as if it were a Polish city.[637]

"By May 2 [1939] the Polish press had proceeded to the point where a demand was made that 'Danzig become Polish.' With Warsaw expressing a rising sentiment of Polish nationalism, there was little prospect for a German-Polish agreement."[638]

On 5 May 1939, the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, declared in his speech to the Polish Parliament:

"The population of Danzig is to-day predominantly German, but its livelihood and prosperity depend on the economic potentialities of Poland.

What conclusions have we drawn from this fact? We have stood and stand firmly on the ground of the rights and interests of our sea-borne trade and our maritime policy in Danzig."[639]

To stand firmly on this ground meant to keep Danzig also in future in an economic dependence by having to rely on Poland for its livelihood and by further increasing this dependence.

On 11 June 1939, Warsaw again increased the number of its customs officials in Danzig. The financial burden thus incurred was carried by the Danzig community. This measure was all the more provocative as the number of Polish customs inspectors in Danzig had risen to four times the number compared with the level of 1929, while in the same period the trade in Danzig was cut down to one third of its turnover value.[640] In the same month the Polish-Danzig border was closed down for Germans. According to official Polish figures, "10.9 per cent of Poland's overseas export were carried by waterways in 1924." 1937 the figure was 4 per cent, and in 1938 it was 2.3 per cent.[641] At the end of June 1939, the Polish minority leader in the Danzig parliament *Volkstag*, Budzynski, assured his few fellow Danzig Poles in a speech delivered at the Polish "Festival of the Sea" that the union of Danzig with Poland would be achieved by the army. [631]

On 11 July 1939, Lord Halifax informed his Ambassador in Warsaw about a talk held with the Polish Ambassador, Count Raczynski, who had recently returned to London:

"Colonel Beck is aware that the 'Polish public opinion was too excited,' so that he felt obliged to state he 'hoped that it might be possible to do something to tone it down'…

Beck admits that nothing had 'materially changed the situation, and Danzig itself was still commanded by Poland'…

But Beck had announced 'to increase their military preparations round Danzig. Nevertheless, Colonel Beck felt the situation could not continue indefinitely on its present lines, as there was the danger of being faced with a *fait accompli*'…

'Although he had not yet come to any definite decision, Colonel Beck thought that perhaps the best way in which to call a halt would be to select very carefully one perfectly clear breach of the Constitution by Danzig, which would not be of so grave a nature as to cause an immediate explosion. If a stand were made on this carefully chosen ground, the Danzigers might be compelled to beat a retreat. Colonel Beck had in view some joint tripartite action, not at Berlin but

at Danzig. He thought this preferable, as it would not confront the German Chancellor directly with any possible loss of face, and it would be easier for him to effect a retreat through Danzig'...

'Colonel Beck was, however, opposed to sending strong notes without careful consideration, since they might only lead to unfortunate results.'

Colonel Beck was not, in fact, taking into consideration any talks 'on the Danzig question… and thought that a tug of war would probably be necessary to re-establish the position, as there had been too many breaches of the Danzig Statute.'"[642]

Although the British government had once again been made explicitly aware, by the middle of July 1939 at the latest,

a. that Poland was planning to become active in Danzig and, by contrived means, diminish the German influence there, with the ultimate aim of eliminating it altogether, and
b. that Hitler was in no hurry where the Danzig question was concerned, and that he was prepared to negotiate through the channels of the League of Nations ("We are having recourse to the High Commissioner and not to Geneva itself"),[643]

they sent shortly after a military mission to Moscow together with the French, with the aim of enlisting the Bolshevik Power for the fight against the German Reich in Europe.

At the end of July, Poland's reaction to the suggestion made by the Danzig *Gauleiter,* Forster, to drop "all military measures now taken in Danzig" if there was a *détente* in the situation, was such that even Lord Halifax had the warning issued to Warsaw that the Polish government was to avoid any "provocative assertions that the German Government are weakening."[644] But this too was of no avail.

On 1 August 1939, Warsaw terminated the export of duty-free herring and margarine from Danzig to Poland. This decision affected ten per cent of the trade in Danzig. No detailed explanation is required to understand how much this additional measure would further impair the already severely restricted basic necessities of life in Danzig. The French Consul in Danzig informed his Foreign Minister on 1 August:

"As the [Danzig] Senate has adopted a policy of silence with regard to the repeated Polish protests in matters of customs inspection, so the Polish government has now taken economic retaliatory measures which could have grave consequences…

These retaliatory measures came quite unexpectedly and produced a surprising reaction, with the reverberation to be found in the press on 31 July. The two daily newspapers protested loudly against this linking of an economic question with the, in their opinion, purely political matter of the customs inspectors. They considered the whole matter a violation of the exchange agreement which was in force until July 31, 1940, and repeatedly described the Polish attitude as 'direct action,' to which they seem to display great indignation...."[645]

All this was taking place at a time when it was well-known in Poland that "hitherto the [Danzig] Senate had never risked coming too far into the open… and that any threat of a customs union with Germany should [not] be taken too seriously." In the discussion of 2 August about these matters, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Arciszewski, gave British Ambassador Kennard to understand,

> "that the general situation might become critical towards the end of this month... He admitted that the situation might develop within a few hours from the political to the military phase…"[646]

Incidentally, the economic severance of Danzig from Poland was in total contradiction to the Polish empty rhetoric that Poland was unable to survive without Danzig. This step of ceasing trade with Danzig – already since 1919 Poland had been continually cutting down her trade with Danzig – was therefore meant to serve militant goals.

On 4 August Poland delivered to the "Free City" an ultimatum with a limitation of seventeen hours, threatening immediate retaliatory actions and reprisals in the event that an (alleged, but not existing) order from the Senate regarding the field of activity of the Polish customs inspectors was not withdrawn and attempts be made to interfere in the duties of the henceforth armed Polish customs inspectors or to impede them. The reason for this: a rumour…

> "The French Ambassador in Warsaw is of the opinion that the Polish action was a tactical mistake. Also, the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, Professor Burckhardt, maintains that the Polish ultimatum of 4 August has ruined all attempts at easing the tension. There is no doubt that Poland, in this instance, has brought to a head an altercation which might well have been evaded without losing any influence and without any material disadvantage."[647]

In the early hours of the morning of 5 August, the President of the Danzig Senate, Greiser, was informed that the import of all food products would be stopped, should Danzig defy the ultimatum of the previous day. Greiser, who considered that "the tenor of the ultimatum, the short deadline and the substance of the threat make any answer impossible," turned to the High Commissioner and declared himself willing to speak on the telephone with the Polish Commissioner General in Danzig, Chodacki, so that he could rectify the trigger-cause of the case's facts and thus prove the groundlessness of the accusation.[648] Although Chodacki agreed to try to get his government to accept the telephone explanations as a verbal note, he did, however, insist that the Danzig Senate confirm in writing the "compliance with the Polish demands." In the meantime, Burckhardt had

also been notified by Chodacki that the wives and children of the Polish civil servants were going to be evacuated. By delivering this threat to starve out Danzig with no immediate cause, the Polish government was infringing upon the vital spheres of interest of Danzig and the Reich. Secret diplomatic correspondence reveals

> "that military measures might have been taken [by the Polish government], had the Senate rejected the Polish note."[649]

Poland was carrying the crisis to further extremes in that she did not withdraw the ultimatum and the threat of embargo, but also in that she never revoked the arming of the Polish customs inspectors, although it had become evident that the pretext for this action was indefensible.

On 6 August, Marshal Rydz-Śmigły announced to 150,000 legionnaires gathered in Krakow

> "that Poland was determined to meet 'force with force' and would oppose emphatically every attempt at transgressing upon her interests, directly or indirectly. Danzig, bound to Poland for many centuries, he added, was the lung of the Polish economic organisation, and the Warsaw government had defined their position on this issue clearly and unequivocally."[650]
>
> "'Danzig is Poland's lung! We have friends who understand us and who have clearly expressed their solidarity with us.'
>
> Resounding from the crowd: 'We want Danzig!'"[651]

The conservative Polish newspaper *Czas* commented on this speech the following day, to the effect

> "that, if the Danzig Nazis were trying to produce a *fait accompli*, the Polish cannons would roar." [650]
>
> "The guns which protect the honour of Poland are pointing at Danzig. Everybody must realise that these guns will be fired if the authorities of the Free City, contrary to the obvious interest of the Danzig population, are going to confront Poland with a *fait accompli*." [650]

The Polish Ambassador in Washington, Jerzy Potocki, thus drew the conclusion from his talks in Warsaw on this 7 August:

> "Poland prefers Danzig to peace."[652]

In this atmosphere, President Greiser submitted to the Polish ultimatum. He did this by delivering a verbal note not only on the telephone; he also put it in writing, as requested by Poland. Although this statement was extremely well written and, furthermore, contained a clear protest against Poland's action, it does not alter the fact that it was a "climb down." The Polish Foreign Minister understood it this way, more or less, as indeed did the foreign press.[653] Beck

"sees his 'policy of steadfastness' confirmed by the outcome of the Danzig crisis, as the French Ambassador in Warsaw reported to his government on 7 August 1939. The margin of any possible Polish concessions, however, has become so narrow, as the same ambassador writes on 8 August, that any incautious act might well have the most serious consequences."[654]

Greiser had notified the High Commissioner of the League of Nations beforehand – and this, too, is a sign of willingness for reconciliation – of the Danzig note and so had tried to obtain his advice and approval; a procedure not regarded as necessary by Poland in their dealings with Danzig.

On 8 August, British Ambassador Henderson reported to his Foreign Minister:

"It is these elements which are reinforced by press articles either in England or in Poland which tend to humiliate Germany particularly as it is strongly felt here that on the part of Poland such defiance would never be ventured unless Britain were behind her…

It may be considered that humiliation is salutary for him [Hitler], but if this dangerous policy is not that of His Majesty's Government, I earnestly submit the utmost should be done at Warsaw as well as London to avoid driving him during the next few weeks into a position where the dictator's pride will not allow him to go slow even if he wishes it."[655]

In a later report he mentions that the press comments in Warsaw and London on the speech made by Marshal Rydz-Śmigły on 6 August have seriously compromised the settlement of the dispute in Danzig of 5 August, and he stresses emphatically:

"[The] attitude of the Poles… appears to me highly and unnecessarily dangerous."[656]

Furthermore, the same day Henderson informed the Permanent Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir A. Cadogan, about a conversation he had with the German State Secretary von Weizsäcker, who was a member of the Anti-Hitler resistance movement. Von Weizsäcker had allegedly asked him:

"Is the Polish Ambassador alive or dead or is he no longer in Berlin? […]

I asked the Belgian Ambassador to repeat [this] to Lipski and [he] had discovered from Lipski that his instructions were to avoid all contacts whatsoever with the Germans.

I personally think that sort of attitude is too stupid for words, but I don't know what you feel in London about it. Britain is public enemy No. 1, but I would certainly not suggest following such a course myself.

I am going to have a talk with [Prince] Lubomirski, [about] the 'Czas' article.

As a matter of fact Lubomirski is the one from the Polish Embassy who has been scaring most of my colleagues by the extreme bellicosity of his remarks.

Provided we do not register less firmness ourselves, we lose nothing and may gain a great deal by giving Hitler the chance of making a peace gesture, which he may really seek. We lose on every count if we deprive him of that chance, since he can prove to his people that he wanted it and that we would not give it to him.

Not only the Germans but also the Italians believe that Poland would like to force an issue this year, because she feels that British support may tend to become more lukewarm later."[657]

On 9 August the Reich government informed Polish Foreign Minister Beck that a repetition of demands made in the form of an ultimatum to Danzig would lead to greater tension in the relationship between Germany and Poland and that an embargo would force Danzig, the "Free City," to seek other possibilities for her imports and exports. Although Hitler had indicated that he would stand by Danzig, he did not, however, threaten.

> "They [the Polish government] replied within 24 hours, without consulting London or Paris, stating that Poland would consider any likely intervention of the Reich government in the relations existing between Poland and Danzig, which would be to the detriment of Polish rights and interests, 'as an aggressive act.' This reply showed – after the Danzig affairs had been fought over unceasingly for twenty years by Berlin and Warsaw – where it had gotten us."[658]

This Polish note from 10 August was additional confirmation that Poland intended to totally eliminate Germany's influence on Danzig – also in the event of a blockade – and to act with aggressive force there. Once again Poland had aggravated the situation to such a degree that even Lord Halifax suggested on 15 August,

> "… the Polish government [should]… from the point of view of world opinion… examine the possibility of negotiation over Danzig… and to give him [Hitler] no excuse for acting."[659]

Ambassador Henderson had also realised the significance of this Polish note and could not "believe" that Hitler would have remained as calm as he indeed did when he learnt about this note.[660] However, the Poles had – as stated by Burckhardt –

> "the intention to obtain a perilous success, and they never stopped talking about this success."[661]

The Polish government was not alone in this: On 13 August Foreign Minister Beck was able to show to the Ambassador of the USA in Warsaw, Biddle, a report from the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, which contained the explicit approval of the British government for all recent Polish measures.[662] That the Polish government should feel encouraged by this goes without saying. The consequences were to follow.

On 18 August the Polish Commissioner General in Danzig, Chodacki, offered to remove the economic embargo if the – meanwhile armed and further reinforced – customs inspectors and frontier guards were granted the right of unrestricted operation in the Danzig territory. The acceptance of this demand would have meant military occupation and, with that, the Polonising of Danzig. So now Danzig was virtually faced with a second ultimatum which allowed for only four alternatives:

a. Political customs strangulation and thus the destruction of the city's economy or rather its livelihood for the future too (since 1 August Polish measures along those lines were already in force!).
b. Consenting to a military occupation by Poland.
c. Opening up the frontier to East Prussia to avoid starvation – thus accepting a likely state of war as had been threatened by Poland for such measure.[663]
d. Seeking help from the German Reich, and thus also accepting a likely state of war as had been threatened by Poland for such measure.[664]

The Danzig Senate accepted the economic strangulation and remained passive. The British Consul General, Shepherd, left the "Free City" on 24 August without taking leave of the Danzig Senate. He was not to return again.[665] The reports of this expert were not utilised by Halifax for any peace resolution.

The negotiations on the question of customs inspectors in Danzig were broken off by Poland on the same day, 24 August. [665] Even if the documentation as reprinted in the files of the German foreign politics (*Akten der deutschen auswärtigen Politik*, *ADAP*), according to which the Danzig Senate was "employing delaying" tactics in the negotiations with Poland, be genuine, it is surprising that Poland did not complain about the manner of negotiation and demand that the talks be put in concrete terms.[666] With breaking off the talks, the refusal to even attempt finding a mediator (*e.g.* Burckhardt or the British government), and the outright rejection, right up to the outbreak of war, to hold any kind of negotiation whatsoever with either the Danzig Senate or the German government and, finally, with the unequivocally formulated annexationist demands, Poland has explicitly demonstrated her lack of interest in these discussions and revealed her true intentions.

In the evening of 26 August 1939, Chodacki urgently recommended to the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt, to evacuate his family quickly, "since there might be clashes any day now, and the town could be bombed."[667]

> "The situation is made worse by the fact that, to a large extent, the attitude of the Danzig Senate is construed as a retreat."[668]

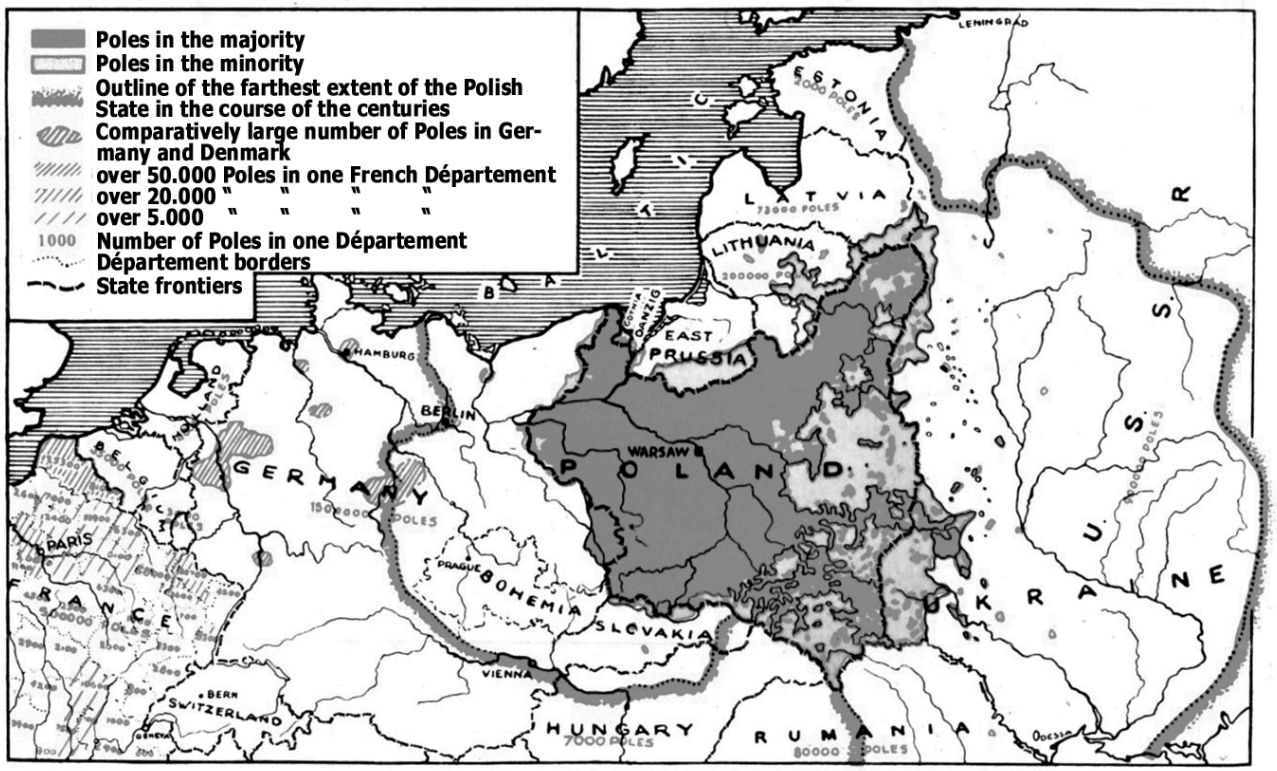
This assessment of the situation emboldened Poland to further provocations, hoping

> "that, in the event of war, unrest is going to break out in Germany and that the Polish troops would march successfully on Berlin."[669]

Since the end of March 1939, the Polish government had refused all talks with the Reich government under threat of war, had opposed every compromise and, even when crisis point was reached, was rejecting every gesture of goodwill for holding negotiations. Already on 27 May 1939, Foreign Minister Beck had given to Burckhardt the impression that "he was giving him instructions, instead of discussing with him ways of working together." [667] "Within the momentary tension," so stated Beck in this discussion with Burckhardt, "no talks between Berlin and Warsaw are possible." [667] Such "explanations" are no excuse for the lack of any commitment to negotiations in those who have created the tension.

As mentioned before, Danzig was not the only goal for Poland, not the only target for her provocations, but rather a means to an end.[670] Poland, along with her English and French friends, was determined to deprive the "Free City" of the freedom to live according to her national and cultural ties, yes, they were even at pains to further limit Danzig's economic basic necessities. This undertaking was ultimately justified on the ground that the "freedom" of the whole world was allegedly menaced by Hitler.

> "Danzig is German. The elections alone prove this. I have quoted the opinions of famous men. No one can deny that the vast majority of the Danzigers are Germans, or that they wish to join Germany. But if the Poles believe to the contrary, why not hold a plebiscite under English control and abide by the decision? Warsaw would, as I was told there, refuse such a solution, knowing the result in advance. Poles told me that this was not a fair test since they had claims to the mouth of the Vistula. But I have dealt with those claims in an earlier chapter, and can only repeat that such arguments would be equivalent to giving the Dutch estuary of the Rhine to Germany, or the Portuguese area around the Tagus to Franco Spain.
>
> There is no sense in fighting to keep one group of Germans in Danzig from joining another group of Germans in the Reich. It would be tantamount to some other country going to war to prevent England and New Zealand from sharing a single government if they wanted to. Danzig, as a city, was founded by Germans. That Slavs may, many centuries ago, have opened a trading centre on the site of the present Free City is no reason for giving the area to Poland. The Serbs are also Slavs, and one might as well award it to them, for we have no proof that the Poles are the descendants of such Slavs. Indeed, historians declare they are not. But his point is not even of academic interest, and if we base claims on ancient days of occupation, we may as well begin by presenting the East coast of England to Denmark, for it belonged to the Danes long after the Slavs who may have founded a trading centre in the Danzig region had migrated. Imagine Germany – or for that matter France, Russia, or Italy – wishing to guarantee Denmark the East coast of England on historic grounds! The historical side of the argument could not be denied – but its utter absurdity would make all Europe laugh."[671]


Poles in the majority
Poles in the minority
Outline of the farthest extent of the Polish State in the course of the centuries
Comparatively large number of Poles in Germany and Denmark
over 50.000 Poles in one French Département
over 20.000 " " " "
over 5.000 " " " "
1000 Number of Poles in one Département
Département borders
State frontiers
LENINGRAD
ESTONIA
LATVIA
LITHUANIA
EAST PRUSSIA
DANZIG
HAMBURG
BERLIN
WARSAW
POLAND
GERMANY
PARIS
FRANCE
PRAGUE
BOHEMIA
SLOVAKIA
VIENNA
BERN
SWITZERLAND
HUNGARY
RUMANIA
U.S.S.R.
UKRAINE
ODESSA

Map 4: *Official Polish map dating from 1939*
Map showing the distribution of the Poles in Poland and in the neighbouring countries of Europe as well as the borderline of "the farthest extent of the Polish State," meant as territorial claims. Published in London 1939. Imagine what would have happened if Germany under Hitler had ever drawn similar maps of "the farthest extent of the German State," which would have encompassed Switzerland, major parts of eastern France, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, the Baltic States, all of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Italy up to the south of Rome...

Map 5: *Polish post card distributed in Poland in 1939, as published by B. de Colonna, Poland from the Inside, pp. 160f. The poster text reads:*

> *"But each of you has in his soul the seeds of the future rights and the extent of the future frontiers." —Adam Mickiewicz*

grey: The westmost historical borders of Poland; black: the 1939 borders of Poland. de Colonna writes about this poster:

> *"This map, which takes the place of a picture postcard (the back was printed as such), is widely distributed for propaganda purposes in Poland. An inflated Poland, stretching to the very doors of Berlin, is depicted. The 'historical boundaries' are intended to awaken the impression that Poland is entitled to*

these areas in the West. The eastern boundaries on the same 'historical basis' have tactfully been omitted, so as to avoid offending the Eastern neighbours.

One unconsciously asks whether Poland believes that British blood should be shed to defend these imaginary frontiers – especially since the demarcation of such boundaries would unquestionably lead to more wars. The quotation shows that the 'historic frontiers' are regarded rather more from the point of view of the future than of the past."

Hitler's Position on Poland

Fundamental Principle from 1933 onward

One of the very first moves of Hitler's foreign policy was the endeavour to bring about an amicable relationship with Germany's eastern neighbour Poland. This despite the fact that, by the time Hitler came to power (1933), the Polish Marshal Pilsudski had planned to attack Germany three times in alliance with France; when, furthermore, up to that time almost half of the ethnic Germans had been driven out of Poland; when further Polish territorial demands continued to be made in a thoroughly aggressive manner; and when not one of the Weimar governments had hitherto managed even a halfway tolerable rapprochement with Poland. The peace and friendship Declaration of 26 January 1934 was so formulated as to renounce every resort to force for a ten-year period and to settle all contentious questions in a neighbourly fashion. The frontier question was ignored. Although it was out of the question for Hitler to conclude an "Eastern Locarno treaty" with Poland, meaning to formally recognise the eastern frontier of the Reich as delineated at Versailles (not one of the Weimar governments was able to do this either!), Hitler did everything within his power to smooth the path for a peaceable future coexistence of the German and Polish nations. All documents attest to the fact that Hitler had signed the Agreement in all sincerity and honesty, and his foreign policy was in conformity with this accord in the years following 1934 right up to midsummer of 1939. In spite of the escalating tensions caused by the Polish aggressive stance starting in March 1939, from 28 April 1939 onward Hitler tried hard to re-align the fundamental principles of the Agreement with the changed conditions (the British guarantee to Poland and Poland's partial mobilisation).

> "Possibly the most distressing evidence of the strong determination of German politics to do justice to the spirit of the treaty of 1934 was the silent passing over, for the time being, of all these chicaneries and all of these blatantly obvious injustices inflicted upon the German element within the Polish State.
>
> If Poland would have done perhaps only fifty per cent for the German minority of that which was being done in Germany for the Polish minority, then the feeling of disappointment in the German public, which was growing more bitter by the day, would not have sprung up."[672]

German proposals for a revision of the questions outstanding since 1918 have always started out from the principle of recognising the Polish interests. Hitler took this approach to such lengths in that he was to be the first German politician since the Versailles border ruling who acknowledged in principle the need for Poland to have free access to the Baltic Sea, who made cessions, and who refrained from threatening military action as a means of exerting pressure so as to force negotiations or during negotiations. Without a doubt, the fundamental principle Hitler was following for many years was this: The border and minority questions are insignificant when compared with the necessity for concord between these two European peoples.

Here is evidence for this for the year 1935:

> "Hitler was clearly demonstrating by his exceptionally accommodating formulae and by his suggestions for a necessary German-Polish 'friendship' in the case of 'danger' that he set great store by Poland's support in the face of the French-Soviet alliance of 2 May."[673]

Evidence for 1936:

> "Ribbentrop and Hitler saw Polish-German relations almost exclusively within the perspective of the, then, rapid pace of Soviet foreign policy and, therefore, were putting much emphasis on the common ground in Polish and German interests."[674]

Evidence for 1936: Records of the Polish Undersecretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Count Szembek, of his conversation with Hitler on 12 August 1936:

> "When he assumed power in 1933, Polish-Danzig relations were in the worst possible state. He then ordered his people that they should at all costs come to an understanding with Poland. The decisions of the Versailles Treaty might be the cause of dissatisfaction and regret, but none the less the facts which had arisen must be taken into account. The Danzig question was negligible in comparison with the magnitude of those problems which pointed to the necessity of harmonising German and Polish policy.
>
> When he ordered his people in Danzig not to quarrel any more with Poland, he was violently attacked not only by German Nationalists, but also by Socialists and Communists, and that in Danzig as well as in the Reich itself. He was accused of betraying Germanism. He, however, ignored these attacks, and did not retreat one single step from his chosen policy of the necessity for an understanding with Poland."[675]

Evidence for 1937: Reports of talks of Marshall Rydz-Śmigły and Field Marshall Göring:

> "M. Göring announced that he had been instructed by Chancellor Hitler to emphasise that he (Hitler) was more than ever determined to continue the policy of rapprochement with Poland… On the German side, there was no desire whatever to deprive Poland of any part of her territory… For that matter, it was quite obvious that a strong Poland, with access to the sea, a Poland with whom Germany could agree her policy, was incomparably more necessary and useful to the Reich than a weak and mutilated Poland. For Germany realised that an isolated Poland would be much

easier to subdue, and then the whole Russian avalanche would strike directly against the German frontier."[676]

Evidence for 1938: Adolf Hitler on 26 September 1938 at the Sportpalast in Berlin:

"We realise that here are two peoples which must live together, and neither of which can do away with the other. A people of 33 million will always strive for an outlet to the sea. A way to understanding, then, had to be found; it has been found; and it will be continually extended further. But the main fact is that the two Governments, and all reasonable and clear-sighted persons among the two peoples and in the two countries, possess the firm will and determination to improve their relations."[677]

Evidence for 1939: Reports of the talks of Hitler and Colonel Beck at Berchtesgaden on 5 January 1939:

"In answer to this the Chancellor stated that to solve this problem it would be necessary to try to find something quite new, some new form, for which he used the term "Körperschaft," which on the one hand would safeguard the interests of the German population, and on the other the Polish interests. In addition, the Chancellor declared that the Minister could be quite at ease, there would be no *faits accomplis* in Danzig and nothing would be done to render difficult the situation of the Polish government."[678]

"… every Polish division… was a corresponding saving of a German division… a strong Poland was an absolute necessity (for Germany)..."[679]

"All of us, victors and vanquished, would be buried under the same ruins; the only one to benefit would be Moscow." [679]

Colonel Beck acknowledged in the subsequent conversation with the Foreign Minister of the Reich, von Ribbentrop, on 9 January 1939 in Munich, that he had noted

"with sincere satisfaction the Führer's clear and firm policy of friendly understanding with Poland."[680]

Not one of these quotations is chosen arbitrarily. Each one is a typical example of Berlin's position vis-à-vis Warsaw. On the other hand, no equivalent basic intention on the part of Poland has been in evidence during all these years.

The Proposal to Poland Made 24 October 1938

Why Choose this Moment in Time? The project of an extra-territorial motorway (*Autobahn*) running across West Prussia into East Prussia goes back as far as the year 1933:

"Hitler's idea, as expressed in May 1935, of a technical transport solution solving the Corridor problem by means of a rail connection and an *autobahn*, is one of the many suggestions intended to diffuse the German-Polish matters of dispute."[681]

In May 1935 the Polish Foreign Minister had started his evasive and delaying tactics, although he, as well as the Polish government, had begun to realise, by 1937 at the latest, the dire necessity of reaching a fundamental settlement on the Danzig question.[682]

As for the Versailles requirements, even today it would be patently obvious to any expert on that period, and as was indeed acknowledged at the time by every reasonable and clear-sighted person, that these must not be allowed to strain neighbourly relations between the peoples of Germany and Poland for all times, that is to say a new formula would have to be found at some time.

That the Polish government had come to be aware of and admit this necessity is shown by the following passage from the Polish memorandum addressed to the German government on 5 May 1939:

> "2. The Polish Government had foreseen for several years that the difficulties encountered by the League of Nations in carrying out its functions at Danzig would create a confused situation which was in Poland's and Germany's interest to unravel. For several years the Polish Government had given the German Government to understand that frank conversations should be held on this subject. The German Government, however, avoided these and confined themselves to stating that Polish-German relations should not be exposed to difficulties by questions relating to Danzig. Moreover, the German Government more than once gave assurances to the Polish Government regarding the Free City of Danzig…
>
> Finally, the Polish Government indicate that their attitude in the question of facilitating communications across Pomorze depends on the attitude of the Reich regarding the Free City of Danzig."[683]

As any politically aware person would agree, such revision must not be worked solely at Germany's expense once again. Toward the end of October 1938, Hitler deemed it appropriate to re-introduce these points for discussion, cautiously and ever willing to compromise. Creating a basis for negotiations belongs to the incumbencies of politics; the choice of timing requires political dexterity. Did Hitler get his timing right? Indeed, he had ample cause to regard the second half of October 1938 as a favourable opportunity for such talks with Poland:

On 22 July 1938, three months before the German proposal, the Polish Foreign Minister Beck had stated to the High Commissioner of the League of Nations, Carl J. Burckhardt:

> "In the absence of any pressure and threats it is still possible to discuss with the Reich some of the left-over problems of the Versailles Treaty. With the hybrid founding of the Free City in 1918 a permanent discord was intentionally created between Poland and Germany."[684]

Or, in another passage:

> "The statute of the Free City of Danzig was without a doubt the most bizarre and complicated creation of the Versailles Treaty. It would be difficult to presume that it had been created other than for the sole purpose of becoming the source of continual conflicts between Germany and Poland or, at the very least, of being a barter object which could be used, at opportune occasions, to sacrifice Polish interests in favour of Germany's."[685]

Five weeks before the German proposal, the Polish Ambassador, Lipski, went one step further by suggesting to Hitler on 20 September 1938 a settlement of the Danzig question. Therefore, the subsequent German initiative, especially since "it was presented in a very amicable form,"[686] should not have come as too much of a surprise.

At the beginning of October 1938, Beck had entered into a German credit agreement that granted Poland a loan of 120 million Zloty. The harmonious accord existing at that time between Germany and Poland was recognised by all European Powers. Beck had refuted, in an interview given to the Hearst press on 10 October, the rumours circulating that Germany had been demanding the re-integration of Danzig, and he emphasised that "peace in Europe would be possible only when the nations reached a lasting understanding with Germany."[687]

The Polish stance during the Sudeten crisis (their forced acquisition of Teschen) and the subsequent Warsaw policy on Czechia was seen by England and France in an antagonistic light. On the other hand, relations between the Reich on the one hand and Britain and France on the other seemed good, even though some sharp, semi-official notes of discord had seeped through from London ever since the Munich conference, although Berlin could not have known their extent nor, indeed, their significance, while on the Polish side, the government there feared that their action against Czecho-Slovakia might result in an intervention by the Soviet Union and was, therefore, asking for at least a benevolent attitude of neutrality from Germany in this specific case.[688] The Soviet note of 23 September 1938 that threatened to terminate the Non-Aggression Pact between Poland and Soviet Russia and, in addition to that, the concentration of several Soviet army units at the Polish border, were concrete reasons for these concerns.[689] Likewise, the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Potocki, confirmed later that relations between Poland and the USSR had "taken a decided turn for the worse after the Czech crisis" in early October 1938.[690]

The immediate impetus, however, started out from the Polish Ambassador, Lipski, and the German State Secretary, von Weizsäcker, —

thus, significantly, neither from Ribbentrop nor from Hitler. On 22 October 1938, per instruction from his government, Lipski presented to the German Undersecretary of State Woermann the request that the Reich government lend its support to the transfer of the Carpatho-Ukraine (a region belonging to the national territory of Czecho-Slovakia) to Hungary. Weizsäcker, who transmitted this proposal to Ribbentrop and Hitler, recommended that one should "seriously" examine the question whether to initiate "a serious discussion with Poland and of demanding compensation from her" — here he had in mind "Danzig and Memel." [688]

England's unprovoked turning away from the only recently signed German-British declaration of peace and friendship at Munich[691] largely contributed to persuading Hitler to clarify anew Germany's relations with Poland. What was not within his sphere of knowledge, however, was the utter determination, as displayed by mainly Roosevelt, to change the course with one aim only — totally ignoring any legal position and in complete disregard of Hitler's peaceful willingness to resolve matters through negotiation — to frustrate any and every step in favour of Germany. Indeed, President F.D. Roosevelt did possess those means of exerting pressure, of which Bullitt, his Special Ambassador, would often boast about during his diplomatic talks before the war. Potocki, the Polish Ambassador to Washington, could report after a conversation with Bullitt on 22 November 1938 that Roosevelt was of the opinion

> "...that, at its close [war], power alone could put an end to Germany's mad aspirations to expansion. In answer to my question as to what he imagined this coming war would be like, he answered that the United States, France and Britain must rearm on a gigantic scale if they were to be able to confront Germany.
>
> The decisive step cannot be taken ... until the right moment comes."[692]

Roosevelt was pursuing the goal of including Poland and the USSR in an anti-German front as well[693] by means of the "economic and propaganda war against Germany" which already within six weeks after the Munich conference — and quite independently of and without any knowledge of the German-Polish talks! — had led in the United States to a "psychosis ... similar to that which prevailed just before America declared war to Germany in 1917." [692]

As mentioned before, Hitler could not foresee this machination from Roosevelt. Bearing this in mind, no historian can, therefore, rightfully

criticise Hitler, neither for his endeavour to initiate the talks with Poland, nor for the contents and the result of these talks.

The Unfolding of the Negotiations

Such was Hitler's circumspection that, when he had Ribbentrop in October 1938 continue with those talks which had been suggested by Lipski and had been further expanded by von Weizsäcker, the Polish Foreign Minister remained convinced for years afterwards that the real initiative for the talks had come from Ribbentrop and not from Hitler.[694] The German basic principle of the negotiations was conveyed by word of mouth; in this way the most prudent of diplomatic forms was employed that would permit a withdrawal without any loss of prestige. In these proposals the Reich government did not make any demands, did not set any deadline, did not exert any pressure, did not impair Poland's sovereignty, did not offend her honour and did not aim to humiliate her. The German proposition envisaged a strengthening of the German-Polish neighbourly relations and a willing European disposition to fight Bolshevism.

Its contents:

The Free State of Danzig would return to the German Reich. An extra-territorial motorway belonging to Germany was to be built across West Prussia and, likewise, an extra-territorial railway with several tracks. In return for this, Hitler was prepared:

a. to guarantee Poland's economic rights in Danzig including a free port;
b. to give final and permanent recognition to the existing borders between Poland and Germany;
c. to prolong the German-Polish Peace Declaration to 25 years;
d. to guarantee the independence of Slovakia, conjointly with Poland and Hungary, and by this step the Reich would renounce her supremacy in this region;
e. to render Poland military assistance in the event of a Soviet offensive.

For many months neither the outline nor the contents of the German proposal were regarded as a stumbling block by Foreign Minister Beck,

even though he was "not willing to give up one crumb of the [Versailles] spoils of war."[695] Furthermore, Beck had been keeping for months the contents of the talks with the Reich government to himself and, indeed, had already raised "fears" in the western countries that "Poland might draw closer to Germany."[696] It is significant that even Beck himself acknowledged the need for a revision of the Danzig question. On 31 October 1938, one week after having taken cognisance of the German proposals, Beck gave instructions to his Ambassador in Berlin, Lipski. Paragraph 4 b read as follows:

> "In the opinion of the Polish government, the subject of any future understanding concluded with the object of permanently maintaining good neighbourly relations would have to be the following: ...
>
> b) Such a settlement of the problem of the Danzig Free City as would prevent, in future, the continually recurring difficulties of a technical and psychological nature which arise from friction in this sphere. The question of the Free City is urgent because in the state of affairs hitherto prevailing, with the League of Nations reserving very far-reaching prerogatives to itself, but not able to fulfil its task in a manner beneficial to the Free City and to Polish interests, the need arises for the Polish and Reich Governments to approach the problem in a spirit of frankness."[697]

Soon after that the Polish Foreign Minister made the official announcement that "Poland was not conducting any negotiations about Danzig and the Corridor."[698] As for internal policy, however, he informed the League of Nations High Commissioner Burckhardt on 21 November 1938 that

> "Poland would give up representing Danzig in foreign affairs. After all, Poland's interest in Danzig was mainly an economic one."[699]

The purpose underlying this statement seemed clear: to inform Hitler of Beck's true intention, that he was about to take up the proposals of Weizsäcker, linking the matter of Carpatho-Ukraine with that of Danzig, and gradually to make concessions. Thus Hitler was further strengthened in his belief that Beck honestly wished to hold talks on these questions, particularly since he had given Hitler to understand on 5 January 1939 at the Obersalzberg,

> "that he could thoroughly appreciate the German point of view, and he was prepared to consider the problem at more leisure." [698]

In reality, however, the Polish Foreign Minister was not at all contemplating a diplomatic readjustment. Toward the end of January 1939, the German Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, travelled to Warsaw, and he made a point of once more stressing that it was Hitler's desire to have

strong neighbourly relations with Poland. This could be accomplished, as had already been indicated previously to the Polish government, by forming a German-Polish defensive alliance within the framework of the anti-Comintern pact and by guaranteeing the common frontiers now in existence, that is to say, Germany would agree to a final and permanent renunciation of Posen-West Prussia and East Upper Silesia, as well as by the guarantee of a non-aggression pact for 25 years.

> "How restrained and justified this [German] request [reunion of Danzig with the Reich and an extra-territorial connection with East Prussia] is, can best be demonstrated by a comparison with the demands made by the German opposition of Goerdeler's sometime later during the war, at a time when the fortunes of war were no longer favouring Germany: Goerdeler was demanding the return of the frontiers of the Reich according to 1914."[700]

It is an undeniable fact that the Foreign Minister of the Reich made every endeavour to establish amiable relations. The French Foreign Minister, Bonnet, commented on Ribbentrop's visit to Warsaw:

> "Nothing about this speech [by Ribbentrop] was alarming. In Paris some people were even disturbed by the sincerity of the verbal exchange: was that not an indication that Poland was preparing to strengthen ties with Germany, at our [French] expense?"[701]

On 31 January 1939 Beck confirmed to the French Ambassador in Warsaw, Noël,

> "that he had found himself in complete agreement with the German Minister on the necessity and the possibility of settling, in the 'spirit of neighbourliness,' which is the basis of the pact of 1934, present and future difficulties between both countries."[702]

Hitler had conciliatory words for Poland in his Reichstag speech of 30 January 1939, despite Ribbentrop's recent lack of success there. The German press was still not allowed to print any offensive reports about Poland. Hitler had ordered the Foreign Office and the Danzig Senate, likewise, to remain calm even in the face of provocations.

> "Cooperation with Poland was still the German aim; Danzig merely the security for it. Hitler himself thought this. On 25 March [1939] he issued a directive:
>
> 'The Führer does not wish to solve the Danzig question by force. He does not wish to drive Poland into the arms of Britain by this.
>
> A possible military occupation of Danzig could be contemplated only if L. (Lipski) gave an indication that the Polish Government could not justify voluntary cession of Danzig to their own people and that a *fait accompli* would make a solution easier for them.'
>
> On 26 March [1939] Lipski returned to Berlin. He brought with him a firm refusal to yield over Danzig, though not a refusal to negotiate. Until this moment everything had gone on in secret, with no public hint of German-Polish estrangement. Now it blazed into the open. Beck, to show his resolve, called up Polish reservists. Hitler, to ease things along as he supposed, allowed the German press to write, for the first time, about the German minority in Poland."[703]

Warsaw was prepared only to shunt out of the way the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig and, in this event, to facilitate the German transit traffic to and from East Prussia. According to Beck, this issue would have "complication involved in such a system."[704] "... any other solution," so Lipski had been briefed already on 31 October 1938, "must inevitably lead to a conflict." [704] This response implied: Either accepting unconditionally the Polish proposal or unreservedly condoning the growing Polish influence in Danzig with the statutes remaining unchanged, which were to have been "guaranteed" by the incompetent League of Nations – or the third option: war! Warsaw was not about to offer any improvements in Danzig's condition; any alterations at Germany's expense, however, would find approval. As from now on, the Reich government had to submit to the threat that "in future Germany was to be held strictly accountable for every action taken by the Danzig Senate."[705]

> "Only Danzig prevented cooperation between Germany and Poland. For this reason, Hitler wanted to get it out of the way. For precisely the same reason, Beck kept it in the way. It did not cross his mind that this might cause a fatal breach."[706]

Beck's dramatic and objectively indefensible breaking off from the German talks assumed even more startling proportions when the British unilateral guarantee of the *carte blanche* given to Poland was expanded into a bilateral agreement on 31 March and at the beginning of April 1939, on the occasion of Beck's visit to London. It did not stop here, though: On 5 May 1939, before the *Sejm*, Beck declared the German concessions to be worthless and that they were not meant to be taken seriously. In this speech Beck was concealing the fact that at no time had he ever shown any real interest in any of the German concessions.

> "A self-respecting nation does not make unilateral concessions. Where, then, is the reciprocity? It appears somewhat vague in the German proposals."[707]

This the Polish Foreign Minister felt emboldened to pronounce in this discourse of 5 May in spite of the fact that only one week before Hitler had announced to the entire world in his address before the Reichstag on 28 April 1939 the exact details of his proposals including the unambiguously worded concessions! By this time, Beck would preclude even the merest hint of a German concession as an "offense against Poland's honour," whose safeguard was more important than that of peace.

From the secret files that were made available only after the war it was confirmed that it was neither the content nor the form of the German proposals, as put forward by Ribbentrop, that were the cause for the brusque posturing as displayed by the Polish Foreign Minister for the benefit of the Polish public and the Polish military, but it was rather prompted by Beck's desire to engage in "Great Power Politics," to challenge Hitler and to be the one to dictate the conditions for the future of the European community of nations.[708] Beck knew that the British government was in full accord with his aspiration, as he affirmed in the same discourse:

> "It was possible to establish rapidly the principles of Polish-British collaboration, first of all because we made it clear to each other that the intentions of both Governments coincide as regards fundamental European problems." [707]

As to what exactly were meant to be the "intentions of both governments" can be discovered from the diplomatic documentation. [708]

The British Ambassador in Berlin, Nevile Henderson, wrote on 26 April 1939 in a private letter to his Foreign Minister:

> "If Danzig had gone German six months ago, no one would have worried, and an extra-territorial corridor over the Corridor is a perfectly just arrangement. If Scotland were separated from England by an Irish corridor, we would want at least what Hitler now demands. Taken by themselves, it would be wicked to drift into a world war for the sake of these points.
>
> I cannot bring myself to believe that the policy of a show-down now rather than later has any moral or practical justification."[709]

The same Henderson in letters of 4 and 6 May 1939:

> "According to my Belgian colleague, practically all the diplomatic representatives here regard the German offer in itself as a surprisingly favourable one. The Dutch Minister, the United States Chargé d'Affaires and my South African colleague have themselves spoken to me in that sense. ...
>
> I must confess that, when Göring used to mention to me the solution of a corridor over the Corridor, I never even discussed it because I thought it too good to be true.…"[710]

The same Henderson in a letter of 26 July 1939:

> "It had, in fact, always seemed to me inevitable that in some form or another Memel and Danzig – on the basis of self-determination and being practically wholly German – must in time be freed from the Versailles shackles and revert to the Reich."[711]

A German historian who is anything but a friend of Hitler:

> "It is, indeed, difficult to imagine how any German government could have demanded anything less than that which Hitler was claiming in his proposals."[712]

An American historian presents a summary:

> "Ribbentrop and Hitler suggested a settlement in October 1938 which was far less favorable to Germany than Point 13 of the Wilson program had been. This proposed settlement would not

enable Germany to regain the position she would have retained had the Allied Powers not have violated the 1918 armistice contract...

The applicable doctrines of international law indicated that the extraterritorial arrangement would constitute merely a servitude rather than an actual transfer of sovereignty. The Germans in this arrangement would receive a special privilege within an area under Polish sovereignty...

The October 1938 Hitler offer was the most modest proposal which Poland had received from Germany since 1918…

[…] it was the impatience of the Polish leaders, rather than of Hitler, which led to the rupture of negotiations in March 1939… Hitler was also willing to retreat somewhat from the original proposals and to abandon the German suggestion for a railway to accompany the superhighway to East Prussia.

It might have made a difference had Beck been equally frank at this time and spoken his mind to Hitler about Danzig. Hitler would have known where he stood before he was confronted with a Polish mobilization and a British encirclement policy."[713]

From Spring 1939 to August 1939

Hitler had found the brusque rejection from Poland regrettable. Foreign Minister of the Reich von Ribbentrop had this to say at the Nuremberg IMT-trials:

"I just said that Hitler received this harsh and serious message of the Polish Ambassador [of 26 March 1939] very calmly. He said, however, that I should tell the Polish Ambassador that of course no solution could be found on this basis. There should be no talk of war."[714]

There were no fanatical statements in Germany that "German honour had been offended"; none of the arguments, therefore, as were brought to bear by the Polish Foreign Minister in his crucial speech of 5 May 1939 before the *Sejm*. The warlike fanfare accompanying the Polish refusal was bound to aggravate the situation even further. In spite of this, any German press reports dealing with Poland continued to be restricted to statements as issued by the German News Agency only (*Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro* = DNB), and so they were mainly kept along defensive lines and "played down"[715] the seriousness of the situation until August 1939.

Hitler had made a good offer to Poland: advantages in the economic field, a guarantee of support against foreign aggression, friendship, yes, even the final and permanent recognition of the unjust Versailles borders as well as Poland's general interests. The Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, affirmed to the British Prime Minister in the London talks of 4-6 April 1939:

"The German Government had never contested Polish rights in Danzig, and had recently confirmed them. ...

Mr. Beck replied that nothing that had happened had passed beyond the stage of conversations. No written demands had been presented to the Polish Government."[716]

Yet in spite of this, Poland favoured the British guarantee, and this was moving the situation ever closer to war in Europe and, ultimately, to a world war, although Poland was not receiving in exchange any economic benefits, nor military support, neither the guaranteeing of her frontiers and no safeguarding of her independence. With this manoeuvre did the British politicians, together with their Polish counterparts, embark on changing the destiny of Europe and, in doing so, they were calculating on a violent reaction from Hitler.[717] The expected and hoped for "outburst of rage" failed to materialise. Hitler confined himself to four steps:

1. For the first time the German press was permitted to report on factual truths about Poland, even on the meanwhile stepped-up anti-German outrages on the German minority, although for many long months a rigorous censorship from the German News Agency (DNB) allowed reporting only on a small and limited scale.
2. Until and including August 1939, the Danzig Senate was repeatedly advised to practice restraint and to avoid altogether any course of action that might be construed as provocation.
3. The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht was directed to prepare a plan of operations which would, after 1 September 1939, facilitate taking swift action against Poland at a moment's notice ("Operation White," directive from 3 April 1939). This plan was designed for a particular situation only: In the event that Poland's isolation could be effected, *i.e.* thereby limiting a war to Poland. It was a secret military directive, intended for a specific eventuality – not in any way a decision for war. Therefore, the order would not have aggravated the situation. Even less so if one bears in mind that no spectacular mobilisation was planned – in contrast to the Polish plan.

   Leaving aside the fact that in Europe it was actually nothing unusual for a country to keep in readiness plans of operation against neighbouring countries, even though their diplomatic relations would still be on a favourable footing, Hitler's directive was merely the response to the change in the situation that was forced upon him by very concrete Polish threats of war. If the sole reason for the posturing of England and Poland was that they were trying to only safeguard themselves against further expansion of the Reich after the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia, then these countries ought to have impeded any warlike eventualities,

ought to have instigated negotiations on minor disputes, and they ought to have orientated their policies toward the principles of international laws and not toward the "laws" of the "balance of power politics." Protective alliances formed along those criteria might indeed have produced worthwhile results, whereas, on the other hand, the guarantee given to Poland created a fateful shift in the situation which played right into the hands of all the war-lusting forces. Although for many years Poland had held in readiness her plan of operations against Germany, it was now that *Poland* was making a move to put it into action without delay, the war aim being: the acquisition of Danzig, East Prussia and the "Oder territories." In contrast, Hitler's plan of operation was not aiming at any political war objective. Quite the opposite: one week later, on 11 April 1939, he stated in a further directive that "Operation White" was merely designed as a precaution in the event that Poland adopts a threatening attitude toward Germany. The German foreign policy continued to be based on the principle of avoiding trouble.[718] Field Marshal Keitel wrote about this in the Nuremberg IMT prison:

> "Hitler was repeating over and over that on no account did he want a war with Poland, and that he was never going to let matters develop to the point where there was a danger of an intervention by France, in accordance with her Eastern treaty obligations."[719]

This measure – the plan "Operation White" – represented the bare minimum that any government would have undertaken, having found themselves in the same or a similar situation:

> "This directive is not issued subsequent to Poland's rejection of the German proposals and requests. It is put out only now, after Poland has allied herself with England. Hitler is beginning to realise that England is now decided upon an out-and-out confrontation."[720]

4. The speech delivered by Hitler before the German Reichstag on 28 April 1939 was, against all expectations from abroad, moderate. Since the British and French guarantees to Poland, in conjunction with the military policies of these countries, contravened the terms of the treaties with Germany, Hitler pronounced in this Reichstag speech that the German-Polish Declaration of non-aggression and friendship of 1934 and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 had been torn up by the respective parties on the other side. Both Poland and Britain have affirmed – contrary to their contractual treaties with Germany – their reciprocal assurances of mutual assistance in the event that the use of

force against the Reich became necessary. In addition to that, the Polish partial mobilisation and an intensification of an already rigorous minority policy was implemented or, rather, condoned. This handling of the situation was in contradiction of the Joint Declarations of peace and friendship which had been signed as a result of the Munich conference only a few months previously. These were, as is well known, to have debarred henceforth any threat of force and any use of force.

Great Britain had brought about a change of fortune in Europe without any justifiable reason, because the Reich government had not threatened Poland, let alone England being threatened by Hitler. It must, therefore, appear all the more astonishing that Hitler should continue in his efforts to win Britain over, even though since the end of 1938 the British leadership had determined not only to adopt an uncompromising approach in all dealings with Germany, but was also plainly and busily engaged in increasing the tension with their blank check to Poland, by turning a blind eye to all Polish measures, with their alliance talks with the USSR, and furthermore with their inflammatory rabble-rousing, for instance with their gross over-stating and exploitation of the Tilea lie, with Chamberlain's ludicrous charge that Hitler wanted to "conquer the world" etc.

In his speech of 28 April 1939, Hitler was endeavouring to restore Germany's prestige, which had been deliberately tarnished. In no way could his explanatory account have aggravated the situation, as it was merely recounting facts. No German naval projects had been stepped up, and there was no slackening in the efforts at improving relations with Poland.

> "In his speech in the Reichstag on 28 April (No. 214) and in the German Government Memorandum of the same day (No. 213), the Führer wrote 'finis' to six years of honest, patient endeavour to secure the friendship of Poland. However, even in this serious moment he made one more offer of peace and declared himself prepared, in the name of Germany, to discuss a new treaty. Poland did not make use of this opportunity, but chose to reply with a haughty speech from M. Beck on May 5, with intensified anti-German agitation and an unending stream of speeches and newspapers articles demanding for Poland more territory inhabited by Germans and even Reich territory. It was admitted in competent Polish circles that M. Beck had become the prisoner not only of Polish chauvinism but also of the British endeavours (No. 216)."[721]

During the following months Hitler was keeping a low profile, avoiding any measures which could have worsened the situation. The signing of the

"Pact of Steel" with Italy that was taking place during this period on 22 May 1939 did not create a provocative alliance designed for offensive purposes. Hitler had even made numerous small diplomatic disclaimers during this time.[722] This included the assurances, conveyed through diplomatic channels, that the Reich government did not wish to go to war over Danzig and was willing to pay a price to improve the general tone.

> "Although the Führer [in July 1939] still insisted that 'there is no modification of German claims regarding Danzig and the Corridor,' he also added the sensational statement that 'nothing will be done on the German side to provoke a conflict on the question; the question can wait, if necessary, until next year or even longer.'" [722]

According to a report sent to Paris by the French Ambassador in Warsaw, Léon Noël, the press chief of the Danzig parliament (*Volkstag*) and editor-in-chief of the German language newspaper *Vorposten*, Zarske, as well as the *Gauleiter* of East Prussia, Erich Koch, had both insistently repeated, independently of each other, to Mr. Burckhardt, the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig,

> "that 'Danzig is really not worth a war.' At the same time, Herr Zarske is anxious, to a degree that is quite remarkable, to brush aside the memory of the Czecho-Slovak precedent. He has admitted that 'this expedition was a mistake,' and even added that 'in Berlin they do not know how to get out of it and would be very glad to find a solution'…"[723]

Enclosed with the same report was an addition which was the description of the personal impressions in Danzig from the French Ambassador's First Secretary, who would relate,

> "…that the effervescence which had been observed in the Free City was considerably exaggerated by interested propaganda and never presented the character of organised preparations for violent action.…
>
> The Danzig authorities declare that the Free City wants to be in such a state 'as not to allow itself to be invaded without resistance.' They also say that Danzig must defend itself against possible aggression by the Poles. This argument, for that matter, is not pure propaganda. It corresponds to a real anxiety on the part of the population. Recently, while in Western Europe the possibility of an approaching 'putsch' in Danzig was kept in view, the Danzigers, for their part, seem to have sincerely feared some such step on the part of Poland." [723]

The Reich press chief's deputy, Helmut Sündermann, justifiably points at the German press directives issued at the beginning of summer in 1939, which have been withdrawn from historical research since 1945 to a large extent:

> "It began with a comment made to the Danzig delegation that was congratulating him [Hitler] on his fiftieth birthday on 20 April 1939: the reintegration of the Free City into the Reich was to be considered as postponed for the time being. It continued with frequent language regulations for the German press... For some months the press reports had been concentrating in growing measure mainly on the 'encirclement,' and only secondarily was the subject Poland. Indeed, the

papers were instructed to only comment on the political tension with regards to Poland in line with such news as was released by the 'German News Agency' (DNB) and, in such cases, to refrain from placing it as a lead feature. However, since almost the entire foreign press during those weeks was writing about nothing else but 'Danzig' and the 'Corridor,' it was not easy for the German editorships to adhere to these strict guidelines...

This is a directive for the press of 3 July 1939:

'The 'German News Agency' (DNB) will be issuing a review of these last few days and manifesting the extent of the agitation as practiced abroad, even at the highest governmental levels: 'The Führer is coming to Danzig,' 'Putsch in Danzig,' etc., etc. When these predictions fail to come true, the agitators hastily assert that the Führer had retreated when faced with the threats. This is the old, well-known tactic; here we find the reason for the more than outlandish fancies of Polish chauvinism.'

The above outlined journalistic precautionary measures were only given up at the beginning of August; in fact, it was in connection with the so-called Customs Inspectors dispute..."[724]

On 11 July 1939 "a person of high standing in National Socialist circles" made a declaration to a member of the French embassy in Berlin, which the French Ambassador acknowledged as authorised by the Reich government. According to this, Hitler was ready to officially drop the Foreign Minister of the Reich, von Ribbentrop, as the initiator of the German-Polish talks, and to improve relations with Poland, Britain and France. In this declaration it is stated:

"Herr von Ribbentrop no longer enjoys the Führer's absolute confidence. The Führer has given expression to a certain number of grievances against his Minister. In particular, he reproaches Herr von Ribbentrop with having wilfully concealed from him several items of information proving the high potential for war of Great Britain. Moreover, he accuses his Minister of having committed him, in connection with Danzig, to a difficult undertaking which runs the risk of compromising Germany's prestige, if a satisfactory solution is not soon found.

It must be borne in mind that the raising of the Danzig question is Herr von Ribbentrop's personal doing. However, when he undertook the campaign for restoring this territory to the Reich, he did not realise that he would meet with firm resistance on the part of the Western Powers.

It seems that the Poles might still make proposals which our Government would agree to consider...

Have you not been struck recently by the somewhat changed tone of our Press toward Poland? You no longer find accounts of Polish-German incidents. Nevertheless, according to our information, the people of Poland continue, on the most trivial grounds, to molest our nationals living in the country. Our Minister wants to hold out a hand to the Warsaw Government for one last time.

The Government, and especially those in control at the Wilhelmstrasse, view the future with some anxiety. They realise that the feeling of hatred for Germany grows daily. Only yesterday, this hatred, this indignation, was peculiar to the rulers of certain States. Today, it looks as if the masses had been won over to these feelings. This development is especially noticeable in the case of Great Britain."[725]

The French Ambassador, Coulondre, who was serving in Moscow for the period of November 1936 to October 1938, "in order to reach a French-Soviet agreement against Hitler," was most surprised about his subsequent Berlin legation[726] and apparently could not quite perceive the purpose of the

move. He lost no time in alerting his Foreign Minister, Bonnet, to this "trap already set," with the suggestion "to do everything within his power to open the eyes of the public," since Germany obviously wanted "the restoration of the frontiers of 1914" and was trying "to shake the attitude of the Western Powers." He had to admit, nevertheless, that the remarks of the "person of high standing in National Socialist circles"

> "…does as a whole tally closely enough with the impression which emerges from a study of the German newspapers, and also with information which I have gathered elsewhere.
>
> Several papers have declared that Danzig is not a *casus belli*, and the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* even seems to invite negotiation, when it writes that a reasonable solution is entirely within the bounds of possibility. A similar note is to be heard in Government circles, where it is given to be understood that there would be no refusal to negotiate, if Poland were to put forward proposals." [725]

This opportunity, too, was lost, as once again the French government failed to intercede and thereby made another endeavour by the Reich government collapse.

The German efforts to reach an understanding with Poland remained unchanged. Official representatives of the Reich and of Danzig were informing foreign diplomats during their numerous occasions of contact about their "mutual apprehension" and, while "there was no urgency about the problem of Danzig," there were foreign forces driving the Danzig matter to a head in such a way that it was getting difficult for the German side to have "ways of retreat... be kept clear."[727] Hitler had not touched on the Danzig question since 28 April 1939 and wanted those diplomats concerned with the question to be informed, even on 25 July, that he was prepared to carry on waiting as long as might be necessary in order to bring about a solution of the Danzig question by peaceful means. [727] On 7 August he sent for the Danzig *Gauleiter*, Forster, requesting an explanation as to why his efforts aimed at easing the political tension had failed.[728] The recall of the German Ambassador from Warsaw was intended mainly as a warning to Poland, but it was also an announcement that Polish efforts for conciliation had become necessary.[729] Unfortunately, Poland chose to ignore this hint as well.

The fact is established that

> "Hitler contributed little to the course of diplomacy between April and August 1939. As on previous occasions, he was content to prepare and to wait, confident that the obstacles would somehow disintegrate before him."[730]

But it was precisely during these months that decisive developments were gotten under way! One may recall the British prompting which the Polish Foreign Minister resisted in London at the beginning of April 1939,[731] the spreading of unfounded rumours of German troop movements against Poland,[732] the over-eagerness shown by Great Britain in the presenting of unsolicited guarantees to other countries, the intensified activity of U.S. President Roosevelt designed to frustrate the policy of appeasement in Europe, the attempts to draw the Soviet Union into the coalition against Germany.

> "Quite otherwise was the behaviour in Berlin. The tripartite negotiations, and in particular the agreement that British and French missions should be sent to Moscow, aroused ever-growing alarm in Hitlerite government circles. They feverishly discussed and attempted to put into effect various measures which they thought might frustrate, or at any rate postpone, the signature of a triple pact."[733]

Also, with regard to Poland, the negotiations proposal prepared by the German Reich and presented to Poland on 24 October 1938 was no longer put up for discussion during the summer months of 1939. Something quite different had become the decisive factor: the de-Germanisation policy which was carried out, because of the British pledge of assistance, with increasingly unbridled restraint in the Corridor provinces, in East Upper Silesia and in Teschen. In addition to that were the various activities by Poland related to its various ultimata directed at Danzig, which were carried to such an extreme that the only choice left to the "Free City" was between starvation and military occupation, and in the end there was the Polish refusal to settle *any* differences by negotiations. One must realise, when assessing these events, that the Polish government was fully aware that Danzig merely served as a pretext for the British government;[734] indeed, that the British assurance of "protecting" Poland in the case of war was nothing but "pure deception."[735] There was no need, therefore, for Chamberlain's self-revelation before the House of Commons on 1 September.

Naturally, there had to be a limit to Hitler's accommodating stance toward Poland. The watershed was reached at that point, when any further yielding of the Reich would have confirmed the Poles in their belief that Germany could be intimidated and provoked with impunity and make Germany loose her prestige. Anyhow, only a statesman with the authority of the former Chancellor of the Reich could proffer a legally binding relinquishment of Posen-West Prussia and East Upper Silesia. Which

“peace-loving” state or which “exemplary states leading the civilised peoples” have ever offered even just one such renunciation? – Not a single one! However, this does not stop some historians from raising an attention-seeking finger aloft and to denounce as “aggression” the upholding of the claims to historical settlement areas, even label the conditional renouncing of this said settlement area as “aggression” – so as to divert attention away from the worldwide, forcibly attained conquests of other nation’s statesmen.

> “If he [Hitler] had wanted to provoke Poland to the point of war, then he would have demanded Danzig and the entire Corridor. And even that would not have entitled Poland morally to a war, as the entire arranging of the Corridor was a mixture of vindictiveness and political folly from the Allies and a gross injustice to Germany…
>
> Instead of now [after Poland’s refusal] increasing his demands or showing himself as impatient or abusive, Hitler proposed further concessions to the Poles and retained an unparalleled patience…
>
> In the interest of a peaceful solution, Hitler was even prepared to abandon the large German minority in Poland, who were being treated with increasing violence by the Poles. But the Poles were neither able to appreciate the moderation of the German demands nor the considerate and friendly manner in which they were presented.”[736]

Also the words conveyed by the British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, on 26 July 1939 to his Foreign Minister, made no impression in London:

> “But it is not impossible that Hitler may consider it more prudent, having achieved so much, not to start a war for what remains. He may well regard it as preferable to obtain somewhat less than his full desiderata by negotiation rather than risk the whole of his winnings at one blow.”[737]

When the Polish government prevented the duty-free export of essential commodities from Danzig on 1 August 1939, directed an ultimatum at Danzig on 4 August and followed that on 10 August with a note to Berlin in which any further intervention by the government of the Reich on behalf of Danzig’s vital interests was defined as an “aggressive act” (which now, thanks to the British blank check, was bound to be followed by a European war!), then the Polish government was undoubtedly guilty of aggressive acts. Threatening with war, Poland was hereby demanding from the Reich government the surrender of all those rights in Danzig which had been insisted upon by every German government since 1919.

Nevertheless, Hitler was not going to be provoked. Whether it was a coincidence or Hitler’s reaction to the Polish ultimatum to Danzig on 4 August – at any rate, he invited the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt, on 10 August for talks on 11 August to the Obersalzberg, where he had him swiftly conveyed by private plane,

with the express entreaty for mediation. The sole existent report about these talks should be evaluated by exercising great caution, since it was neither written down by Burckhardt nor any other participant, but rather by two representatives of Halifax and of Bonnet.[738] The fact remains: on 11 August Hitler had – without any doubt after learning of the new Polish note from the day before – informed Burckhardt that he – Hitler – at present was not intending to make any Danzig proposals, but that he was willing to wait, providing that Poland refrained from provocative action and from offending the German prestige any further. Local negotiations might be continued; the German willingness for discussions was already known to the Poles. Therefore, would the Poles take the initiative for negotiations, as this had been taken out of his hands because of the Polish threat of war on 26 March 1939? Hitler:

> "My wish is for an Anglo-German understanding and to conclude a once-and-for-all final pact with England."[739]

Burckhardt was hindered from achieving this task – not by the German side! – and he did not render any objective and convincing information as to the reasons for the failure of his mediation. Nevertheless, he was alluding to powers abroad in the West that had made the aim perfectly clear as "not to make easy" a German drawing back, and they had given him the advice "to refrain from his damaging appeasement manoeuvres in Danzig."[740]

After taking note of this endeavour for mediation by Hitler, Lord Halifax informed his Ambassador in Warsaw, Kennard, on 15 August 1939:

> "It was his impression that Hitler was still undecided, was trying to avoid a war and to keep a low profile without loss of face, if possible."[741]

The British historian A.J.P. Taylor arrived at the following conclusion:

> "He [Hitler] was intending to succeed without war, or at any rate only with a war so nominal as hardly to be distinguished from diplomacy. He was not projecting a major war... He was not interested in preparing for a long war against the Great Powers.
>
> A big war with the Western Powers was, undoubtedly not part of his plan.
>
> British policy had, without design, made Danzig the decisive question for 1939...
>
> Danzig was the most justified of German grievances: a city of exclusively German population which manifestly wished to return to the Reich and which Hitler himself restrained only with difficulty…
>
> The destruction of Poland had been no part of his original project. On the contrary, he had wished to solve the question of Danzig so that Germany and Poland could remain on good terms..."[742]

Adolf Hitler was explaining his policies to the French Prime Minister, Daladier, in a letter of 27 August 1939, as follows:

"Year by year I have tried earnestly to achieve the revision of at least the most impossible and most unbearable of all the conditions of this Dictate through negotiation. This proved impossible. Many enlightened men of all nations believed and were convinced that revision was bound to come. Whatever objection may be raised against my methods, whatever fault may be found with them, it cannot be overlooked or denied that I succeeded without any more bloodshed in finding solutions which were in many cases satisfactory not only for Germany. By the manner in which these solutions were accomplished, statesmen of other nations were relieved of their obligation, which they often found impossible to fulfil, of having to accept responsibility for this revision before their own people... No Frenchman with a sense of honour and certainly not you, M. Daladier, would, in a similar position, have acted differently from the way I did...

It is a lie when the world alleges that we always used pressure in attempting to carry out any revision. During the fifteen years preceding National Socialism's rise to power there was ample opportunity to revise the Versailles Treaty by peaceful means. But the revisions were not made. I myself then took the initiative in every single case, not only once, but many times, to bring forward proposals for the revision of absolutely intolerable conditions...

I am firmly convinced that, if Poland at that time had been advised to take a sensible course instead of being incited by a wild campaign of the British press against Germany, accompanied by rumours of German mobilisation, then Europe would today be able to enjoy a state of profound peace for the next 25 years. Actually, it was the lie about German aggression that excited public opinion in Poland; the Polish Government were handicapped in making necessary and clear decisions and, above all, their judgment on the extent of Poland's possibilities was clouded by the subsequent promise of a guarantee. The Polish Government rejected the proposals. Firmly convinced that Britain and France would now fight for Poland, Polish public opinion began to raise demands which might best be described as sheer lunacy, were they not so extraordinarily dangerous. At that time unbearable terrorism set in; physical and economic oppression of more than one and a half million of Germans living in the territories severed from the Reich. Even in Danzig the outrages committed by the Polish authorities fully created the impression that the city was apparently hopelessly delivered up to the arbitrary action of a power that is foreign to the national character of the city and its population. Yet I would ask you to appreciate also this; namely, that no nation with a sense of honour can ever give up almost two million people and see them maltreated at its own borders."[743]

Any objective observer would have to agree that it had become necessary for the Reich to give protection to the ethnic Germans in Poland and Danzig because of the unrestrained Polish provocations. Not only the German government, but any government, would have needed to check such provocations or else surrender into foreign hands, along with her prestige, the protection and the rights of the minorities for whose very safeguarding of their livelihood she was responsible.

The well-known British military historian Liddell-Hart wrote on 3 September 1949:

"After the end of the war, the most important German archives fell into our hands, and so we had a very precise picture of the intense level of the dread of war felt among the German leadership."[744]

However, these documents have been kept largely hidden from the public worldwide. The Reich government did not have them published because they did not want to provide the enemy with "evidence of weakness,"

whereas the victors, who took these documents as booty, were not anxious to have them widely disseminated for obvious reasons.

Nevertheless, there are politicians of renown of Germany's enemies who are proving that the concepts and the esteem, the purpose of *raison d'état* are equally valid everywhere, here as well as there, be it in this state or in that regime. The 1923 *British Yearbook of International Law*, London:

> "A government cannot remain indifferent to the lot of the citizens of an alien state who have the same national culture, who speak the same language, who profess the same faith as the majority of their own nationals."[745]

The Polish Foreign Minister on 5 May 1939 at the *Sejm:*

> "We in Poland do not recognise the conception of 'peace at any price.' There is only one thing in the life of men, nations and States which is without price, and that is honour."[746]

Prime Minister Lloyd George:

> "If England had to submit to be treated thus that in instances where her vital interests are at stake she would have her voice pushed aside as irrelevant in the council of nations, then I must say that 'peace at any cost' would mean a humiliation that no great country can endure."[747]

American President Eisenhower stated in a televised speech on 16 March 1959:

> "Peace cannot be bought by making a sacrifice of two million free Berliners."[748]

The Armament Level in the Year 1939

Germany

In the assessment of the military potential of the European powers, many historians nowadays "overlook," when debating the German rearmament, the strategic plans of the Polish, the French, but also of the Soviet Armed Forces. However, leaving aside these plans, the actually existing war potential of the individual European powers will attest to whether or not any of these nations could have had the intention for an "intensive and criminal rearming aiming at a world conspiracy". What are the results of the six years of rearming in the Third Reich from 1933-1939?

Professor Michael Freund, the much-quoted German historian after 1945, wrote in factual plain language in the year 1944:

> "Germany's struggle to get back on her feet and the German armament took place against the backdrop, and as a consequence, of a feverishly pursued **world-wide arms race and of a revolution in military policies on a global scale.**
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | 30-07-1934: | The reason for the British air-armament program was given by the Lord President of the Council in the British House of Commons, Stanley Baldwin, with these sensational words: 'Britain's frontier is on the Rhine!' |
> | 24-09-1934: | Introduction of the auxiliary service in Poland. |
> | 28-11-1934: | Escalation of the British air-armament. |
> | 06-12-1934: | Military service is to be extended in Switzerland. |
> | 01-01-1935: | Military service of two year duration in force in Czecho-Slovakia. |
> | 30-01-1935: | Announcement that the strength of the Red Army had already reached one million men under arms. |
> | January-March 1935: | The announcement of the French-Russian Entente resulted in quite considerable armament measures on France's part, in particular the restructuring of the French Air Force. |
>
> When in the British White Paper of 1 March 1935 the British armament measures were justified on the grounds of Germany's rearming, *The Times* declared that the argument given for the British armament measures 'could have been presented more objectively.'"[749]

Not only did Germany have to take account of the armament measures of the other powers, but she also had to take note of the threatening posturing

– especially Poland's – aiming at military invasion.

> "Furthermore, the [German president] Field Marshal [Hindenburg] retained discretionary powers over the German army and foreign politics when Hitler came to power, and this was respected by Hitler until the death of Hindenburg.
>
> For the moment, all obvious violations of Versailles – for example to exceed the 100,000 men-limit – would be avoided; Hitler kept strictly to the armament negotiations. However, the constant threat of a preventive war eventually became a very effective argument for the German armament demands."[750]

In the opinion of the Chief of the German General Staff, General Adam, there was done "during the whole of the year 1933 practically nothing to increase the army."[751] This was at the time when, for example, it was pointed out by the Chief of the French General Staff, Gamelin, that, compared with Germany, France had an armament's lead of 20 billion francs.[752] Furthermore, this came at a moment when France was rejecting the German proposals for disarmament with the concealed opinion:

> "You are wasting your time! The convention which you favour will never be concluded for we shall never be a party to it! Hitler won't last much longer, his fate is sealed! Any convention with him would consolidate his power. Should war break out, not a week would elapse before he would be deposed and replaced by the Crown Prince." [752]

The highest official in the British Foreign Office, Lord Vansittart, was at that time entertaining similar ideas, that is, to keep Germany down through economic pressure:

> "We can ill-afford to let Hitlerite Germany prosper. The Trade Union Congress is also of this opinion, though for different motives – see their recently announced boycott of German goods."[753]

In his view one should aim for the destruction of "Hitlerism" and make every effort to keep Germany in such an enfeebled and miserable condition that not even the Communists would want to become involved there. [753] How persistently these and similar views were influencing the development of an informed opinion in the British military and the British government is demonstrated by the example of a report from March 1934 by the Defence Requirements Committee assigned to the government: This report takes it naturally for granted that the potential foe was Germany. [753] Of course, this report, too, goes back to prior events and into a time when Hitler had not yet assumed power and Germany was as yet without an air force and without National Socialism. British statesmen were discussing already in November 1932 plans which envisaged air deterrence that would enable

Britain to have "some military influence in Europe" without having to maintain a large army on the continent.

> "'The only defence is in offence,' said Baldwin then, considering the role of bomber aircraft, 'which means that you have to kill more women and children more quickly than the enemy, if you want to save yourselves.'" [753]

So what efforts did this German opponent make?

In the fiscal years 1933-34 and 1934-35 no increase in the armament expenditure was recorded. An expenditure representing 4% of the gross domestic product has to be regarded as positively moderate compared to the neighbouring countries (Great Britain 3%, France – 1932 – 8.1%, Soviet Russia 9%).[754] The armament expenditure was only increased in the financial year 1935-36, in view of the changes taking place in foreign affairs politics (the collapse of the disarmament negotiations, the French-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact). For two years foreign politicians and the foreign media had been accusing Hitler of sabre-rattling to get into a "criminal war of aggression" and thereby destabilising peace by spreading terror and instability around the world. In the end, Hitler saw no other alternative but to strengthen the German Armed Forces as a protection against the tendencies displayed by the other powers of forming various blatantly aggressive alliances against the Reich. Spreading lies about the German rearmament became a necessary requirement in order to find a justification for the refusal to disarm, for continuing the arms build-up, for the forming of military alliances, for the building of fortifications, for General Staff meetings and, also, to continue lending some semblance of right and necessity to the policies of Versailles. The foreign military attachés as well as the foreign secret services in Germany had precise information of the quite moderate level of the German armament. There is an abundance of documents confirming that the foreign governments (Poland, Great Britain, France and USA) felt emboldened into taking tough actions against Germany when they realised the inadequately developed state of the German military defence.[755] This reality, however, did not stop those governments from inflaming their population by feeding them false data and fake arguments through the media.

The British historian A.J.P. Taylor stated:

> "The French had fired the starting-pistol for the arms race."[756]
>
> "Germany, for instance, was little more prepared for a great war between 1933 and 1936 than she had been before Hitler came to power. The difference was that he had strong nerves, and his

predecessors had not."[757]

"Many of the early alarms about German rearmament were false alarms... Even in 1939 the German army was not equipped for a prolonged war; and in 1940 the German land forces were inferior to the French in everything except leadership."[758]

"The Nazi secret was not armaments production; it was freedom from the then orthodox principles of economics."[759]

"Under Hitler's direction, Germany was equipped to win the war of nerves – the only war he understood and liked; she was not equipped to conquer Europe....

In considering German armament we escape from the mystic regions of Hitler's psychology and find an answer in the realm of fact. The answer is clear. The state of German armament in 1939 gives the decisive proof that Hitler was not contemplating general war, and probably not intending war at all."[760]

Compared to the level of 1944, the German level of armament had reached 9% in 1937, 16% in 1938 and 18% in 1939.[761]

1939 = 18 %

According to another calculation, which takes as a basis Germany's armament of 1943, the figures look as follows:[762]

1933 = 2%

1934 = 2%

1935 = 4%

1936 = 6%

1937 = 9%

1938 = 20%

1939 = 25%

1940 = 44%

General Jodl stated at the IMT in Nuremberg on 4 June 1946:

"In 1935, when we set up 36 divisions, France, Poland, and Czechoslovakia possessed 90 divisions for times of peace, and 190 divisions for war. We had hardly any heavy artillery, and tank construction was in its earliest stages…

Real rearmament was only begun after the war had already started. We entered into this world war with some 75 divisions. Sixty per cent of our total able-bodied population had not been trained. The peacetime army amounted to perhaps 400,000 men, as against 800,000 men in 1914. Our supplies of ammunition and bombs were ridiculously low.

… And if we did not collapse already in the year 1939, that was due only to the fact that, during the Polish campaign, the approximately 110 French and British divisions in the West were held completely inactive against the 23 [western] German divisions.

… we had ammunition for 10 to 15 days of combat..."[763]

Moreover, these divisions were "equipped with very little artillery and almost no means at their disposal of any anti-tank defence"; furthermore,

they were immobile.[764] Even if the territorial and the reserve divisions of the third and forth "wave" are also added to the count, the American military historian Telford Taylor arrives at only 106 German divisions in the year 1939, while the French army alone, including trained reserves and colonial troops, comprised an equal number of divisions at the outbreak of war, but due to the level of training was stronger than the German army.[765] Moreover, to this have to be added the British, the Belgian (23 divisions = 550,000 men) and the Dutch divisions which, combined with the French divisions on the German front, came to 156, or rather, 142 divisions.[766] The German leadership had to consider that these troops, in case of conflict with Poland, would be deployed for an advance on the Reich. Besides the approximately 2.6 million German soldiers (including reserves),[767] grouped into "102 divisions,"[768] there were in the autumn of 1939 a further 500,000 men in paramilitary organisations.[769] Nonetheless, only 52 divisions "could be considered fully fit for action." [768] In the year 1914 there were almost one million more men under arms in Germany than there were in 1939. [769]

> "In contrast to 1914, when the German Reich had at her disposal 25 age groups of trained reservists, in 1939 she could only call to arms 5 age groups." [768]
>
> "In 1935, France, unaided by her previous allies, could have invaded and reoccupied Germany almost without serious fighting. In 1936 there could still be no doubt of her overwhelmingly superior strength. We now know, from the German revelations, that this continued in 1938…
>
> In the year after Munich [1939], which we are now examining, the German army, though still weaker in trained reserves than the French, approached its full efficiency.
>
> The German army was not capable of defeating the French in 1938 or 1939.
>
> ... when the German Army could scarcely put half a dozen trained divisions on the Western Front, the French with nearly sixty or seventy divisions could most certainly have rolled forward across the Rhine or into the Ruhr."[770]

In this connection, one ought to compare the size of population of the two countries: Germany had 80 million people, France 42 million people.

Burton Klein, an American scientist (Harvard University), supplements in his thorough study on the German economic war preparations the previous data with the following words:

> "Up to the time of the German reoccupation of the Rhineland in the spring of 1936, rearmament was largely a myth. ...
>
> The armed forces did not even have a central economic agency which could review the various demands for materials and formulate some sort of a reasonable requirements picture.
>
> It was a cardinal policy of Hitler that war strategy was not a concern of economic planners… Supplies of important items like copper, iron ore, gasoline, and rubber were, in August 1939, in sufficient supply for only 3 to 6 months of contemplated war needs.
>
> ...in 1939 Germany's steel economy was dependent on foreign sources for 65 per cent of the ore supplies and practically all of the ferroalloys.

In the expansion of imports in 1937 and 1938, however, food imports increased faster than raw material imports, with the result that the composition of imports was almost the same in 1938 as it had been in 1929...

It can be said that German manpower was fully mobilized in 1939 only in the sense that there was no unemployment... The distribution of the labor force over this fourteen year period was surprisingly stable. Pronounced shifts occurred in only two of the occupational groups – agriculture and public employment... There were large sectors of the economy in which manpower was unaffected by war mobilization...

In 1939 the civilian economy still possessed large reserves of labor... There was no pronounced concentration of investment in those activities associated with economic preparations for war.

In the pre-war period, the German economy produced both 'butter' and 'guns' – much more of the former and much less of the latter than has been commonly assumed. By 1937, civilian consumption, investment in consumer goods industries, and government non-war expenditures equaled or exceeded previous peak levels. There is no question, therefore, of a rearmament program so large that it prevented a substantial recovery of civilian production.

The volume of munitions production and the number of divisions which Germany mobilized were, by comparison with published appraisal, small. Investment in those industries comprising the war potential was not much larger than the volume reached in the prosperous years of the previous decade and was small in relation to total investment."[771]

"The government's disinclination to ask for civilian sacrifices was demonstrated in a number of instances. One of these was its refusal to consider higher taxes as an alternative to deficit spending; another was its unwillingness in 1937 to cut food imports in favor of increased raw material imports; still another was its failure to transfer workers out of unessential occupations; another example [was] inefficient economic administration...

When Schacht [President of the Reichsbank] attempted to cut expenditures for municipal improvements, he was invariably opposed by some prominent party members. When, on numerous occasions, he tried to reduce the budget of the German Labour Front, the issue was taken to Hitler, who invariably decided in favor of the latter. Because it was contradictory to its ideology, the party also opposed measures to force a larger number of women into the labor force.

Public non-war expenditures in 1937 and 1938 were much above any previous peak...

The factors which prevented the Nazis from having a larger rearmament were:

a) the fear of larger deficits;

b) the government's unwillingness to ask for civilian sacrifices;

c) Hitler's inability to subordinate various private interests to his aims;

d) a lack of efficiency in the direction of the program."[772]

In another statement it is confirmed:

"It was shown that the precision mechanism of National Socialist militarism was working neither according to a planned overall strategy nor according to a long-term planning of an armament program."[773]

On 5 May 1938, General Ludwig Beck, Chief of the German Army's General Staff, had diagnosed the military-political situation, and he also cited this as one of the reasons for his opposition to Hitler:

"…1. Germany's military situation, when considered in its entirety, bears no comparison to the impotence of former years. However, when viewed in relative terms, it cannot be regarded as strong as in 1914, because for years all of the powers that would possibly be against Germany have also been rearming to a substantial degree, sometimes to the fullest extent. Furthermore, as is generally known, Germany will have, for years to come, only deficient armed forces."[774]

Only in the period *after* the Poland campaign,

"the German government started the switch-over of the country's industry onto the tracks of war and began to expand hurriedly production for war."[775]

Hereby even the Communists concede that, at the outbreak of war, Germany's industry – at least in its essential components — had not been "switched-over onto the tracks of war and war production had not yet been expanded."

"The main reason forcing the German High Command to postpone the date of the offensive [against France] several times was the fact that the Germans were not able to accomplish the formation of the essential army units in time." [775]

If the Reich had been building-up armaments for an offensive purpose for years and had been drilling and training, then it should have been in a position, at least several months after the outbreak of the war, "to form its army units in time"!

Soviet sources also confirm that the German campaign in France was carried out not with superior, but rather with numerically inferior forces:

"The armed forces of Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, taken altogether, totalled 142 divisions (according to other sources, even 156 divisions); they were confronted by 136 German-fascist divisions...

Given this power balance and the resources available, there is no basis for asserting the vulnerability of the Allies or their being ill-prepared for war in the technological field and to be talking about the decisive superiority of the fascist aggressor."[776]

"It became evident already during the campaign of Poland that the German artillery was not equal to the task of returning fire under the conditions of the rapid tempo of the fighting, not only qualitatively but also quantitatively. The German High Command was compelled to re-enforce the effectiveness of the artillery fire with the assistance of the air force... The miscalculations of Hitler's generals in regard to the artillery were to bear grave consequences for the German-fascist army in the course of the Second World War."[777]

"American military experts have revealed the fact that Churchill's criticisms of alleged British and French lag in armament and his allegations about overwhelming German superiority and activity in armament were utterly without foundation...

An official report submitted to the Secretary of the Army of the United States in October 1947, entitled 'Foreign Logistical Organisations and Methods,' exposed the gross inaccuracy of Churchill's figures and charges."[778]

This report can be found in a publication of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. It had been transferred there, without any protest, from an official survey of the U.S. War Department. We are dealing here with an admission from one of Germany's western enemy that was validated as correct by Germany's eastern enemy:[779]

"In 1938 Germany produced only 3,350 combat planes or 5,235 military aircraft of all types – very few indeed with which to wage a long war. In 1939, on the eve of the war, Germany produced 4,733 combat planes or 8,295 military aircraft of all types, England – 8,000 military planes of all types...

Therefore, between the air fleets of England and Germany alone there existed almost no quantitative difference. Germany produced mainly fighter planes and bombers, [whereas] England continued to place the emphasis on the production of fighter aircraft.

In the last four months of 1939 (that is, in the first four months after the war had started), Germany produced only 247 tanks and self-propelled guns, while the British produced 314 tanks." [778+780]

"In September 1939, the sum total of all tanks produced in Germany amounted to about 3,000, of which only 300 were medium-heavy. Until 1939 not a single new armament factory had been built in Germany…

When Germany invaded Poland, the Hitler-army was equipped for only six weeks of combat! The German air force could count on only 1,000 aircraft for tactical aerial fighting (the first line); also the supply of bombs was sufficient for only 3 months of war (calculated according to the quota used in the Poland campaign); the ground forces had in total only three *Panzer* divisions, while the reserve of *Panzers* numbered 600; the navy had 53 submarines at its disposal.

Therefore, Hitler-Germany could only wage a short war and, in fact, concurrently against only a single enemy." [779]

One would do well to read this quotation more than once and to pay attention to the source. One page further on it is stated that Germany was only able to increase her output of aircraft, tanks and all the other remaining armaments many times over, because she had managed to crush France and to drive off the British Army from the Continent and, thereupon, help herself to the rich sources of occupied Europe.

Accordingly, Germany in 1939 had at her disposal in aircraft, tanks and ammunition, proportionate to her population (80 million), only slightly more than half of the armaments compared to what Britain had (with 50 million), just one of Germany's main enemies. What is not taken into account here is the Canadian industry that was working to supply British armaments, as well as the facts that U.S. President Roosevelt had promised wide-ranging assistance to England and France already months before the outbreak of war and, furthermore, that England was militarily protected owing to her island position.

"In their pro-Ally and anti-revisionist volume *The Challenge to Isolation* [concerning the treaties dictated by the victors after the First World War], the American professors William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason offer the final refutation of Churchill's absurd charges of overwhelming German armament in 1939:

'There can now be little doubt that the Germans in 1939 were far from being prepared for a long war on a large scale. Their current war production was inferior to that of the combined British and French, and they had remarkably little in the way of reserves. Of the hundred divisions they put into the field against Poland, only three were mechanized and none completely motorized. In a word, the Germans were equipped for a two months *Blitzkrieg*, such as they waged in Poland. They were by no means equipped for the type of war in which they became involved.'" [778]

The German Reich Defence Committee saw a future war as "only a defensive war," since "heavy artillery was entirely lacking; tanks were at

the test stage; the ammunition situation was catastrophic."[781] The German "armaments programs [were] geared to 1943 or 1944."[782] Although an armaments program is by itself no proof of an offensive intention, Germany's numerous armament shortcomings demonstrate that the war in 1939 had not been "planned" by Germany. The High Command of the German Army received in December 1938 the order – that is almost a year before the start of "the war for the conquest of the world"! – that up to the year 1945 they were to apply themselves only to the task of organisational restructuring and training and to desist from every means of preparation for a possible war, which also included preparations for securing the borders.[783]

"The West Wall was still short of shutters, turrets and machine gun mounts."[784]
"In the transportation sphere Germany is not, at the moment, ready for war."[785]

Germany's heavy industry, which depended 80 per cent on the import of iron and manganese, had done nothing in the way of stockpiling in the event of war.[786] Hardly any of the essential raw materials were in stock or could have been produced in sufficient quantity.[787] The rolling stock of the national railway (*Reichsbahn*) was less than in 1914.[788] The change-over from a peacetime economy to a war economy had to be improvised, since there existed neither any pre-planned guidelines, nor any coordinating measures, nor any standardisation criteria, nor any limiting of types, nor any appropriate planning of personnel.[789]

"Some isolated measures, as for example the stockpiling of food, demonstrate clearly that those in charge of the agrarian policy of the German Reich before 1939 were more likely expecting to be forced into becoming self-supporting in terms of food for some length of time ahead, rather than to be counting on any yield from large areas of super-abundance resulting from an occupation by German troops."[790]

A further admission from a Soviet source:

"One of the weak spots of the Hitlerite war organisation was, above all, the totally inadequate preparation of the technological-material foundation of the Reich, which was not geared in its economy for a war of global proportions against the coalition of the great powers. This was mainly caused by insufficient supplies and stocks of several of the most essential types of strategic raw materials, the dependence of the armed forces on the importing of these raw materials from abroad, and the continual restrictions involved that were placed upon this import. The general cuts in exports and Germany's enormous national debt caused many economic problems which had a direct bearing on war production output and the condition of the armed forces.

It is also necessary to point out that, when measured against the demands of a world war, the Wehrmacht had at its disposal a limited arsenal with regard to armoured vehicles and, especially, to war stock piles. The lack of an essential fleet of medium and heavy tanks, the predominance of light tanks, which, as practice was soon to show, did not fulfil the protection requirements because of their date of construction, imposed a limit to the size of the tank units and made it necessary to improvise their formation...

The Hitlerite State could not withstand the burden of a long war against the coalition of European states."[791]

It was especially the German Army General Staff that feared military action of the western powers in the case of a conflict with Poland:

"It was well known in Berlin that the combined forces of France, England and Poland could outdo the Wehrmacht... by quite a large margin. The war on two fronts has always been a nightmare for the German militarists, but in the prevalent conditions of 1939 it could have disastrous consequences for the Third Reich. All these fears are clearly evident in the various strategic and operational plans of the Army General Staff."[792]

Britain, France and the Soviet Union would have been capable in 1939, with "no fewer than 270 divisions, with thousands of tanks and planes, to clamp the German army in the vice of two fronts."[793]

In the last year of peace (from 1 January to 5 September 1939), Germany had obtained from the USA war materials to the value of 23,000 (23 thousand) dollars, France to the value of 16,000,000 (16 million) dollars and Great Britain to the value of 21,000,000 (21 million) dollars.[794] It can be proved that Germany ranked in a decidedly bottom position by far with regards to purchasing armaments from abroad. This fact too demonstrates that Hitler had not been drafting any hastily prepared plans or, indeed, armament programs geared to 1939, as he was dissuading his generals from any arms escalation even in the summer 1939. He was not anticipating the likelihood of a decisive crisis before 1943-1945, so that the construction of roads and the urban development still occupied the central position of his economic policy.

There was no German plan of operation at the outbreak of the war, neither against the western neighbour France, nor against the sea power Great Britain;[795+796] until the spring of 1939 there was merely a plan for the protection of the eastern border. The drafting of an operational plan against Poland (Operation "White") was only ordered on 3 April 1939[797] and, in fact, with the explicit explanation, "in case of need, to eliminate any threat from this direction."[798] This was done at the time when an armed conflict was becoming plainly evident, brought about by the announcement of the British blank check, in conjunction with the chauvinistic and warlike posturing of the Poles, "when their own excessively overestimated strength apparently blinded them to the deadly peril."[799] Even immediately after the campaign of Poland, no plans for an offensive against the West had been drawn up in Germany.[800]

"Few preparations were made for even a defensive war against France. A small section of the German air force was stationed in western Germany, 'to prevent France from obtaining complete freedom of action in the air.' Only two army divisions were placed on the Siegfried Line; two more were added in September – as against a potential French strength of more than 80 divisions."[801]

"The Germans won a decisive victory [in the campaign in France in 1940] without great superiority in either manpower or equipment." [53]

Air Force

The total ready-for-action strength of the German *Luftwaffe* (air force) is stated not only by the German, but also by the opposing side as 3,000 aircraft.[802] Other sources indicate 1,000 bombers and 1,050 fighters.[803] The possibilities for the replacement of planes were very scanty.[804] There were no four-engined bombers, and even the twin-engined medium bombers (Dornier 17 and Heinkel 111) did not prove adequate.

"The Junkers 88, the standard long-range bomber during the war, was available by 1939 only in small numbers, and did not see service in Poland. Good as it was, the twin-engined Junkers 88 was not a true heavy bomber."[805]

Britain's and France's combat-ready air fleets alone comprised 7,300 aircraft.[806] In 1939, Britain had 2,327 aircraft of first line capabilities at her disposal, of which 1,715 were based at home ports (comprising 855 bombers, 560 fighters, 300 reconnaissance planes), 222 were with the navy and 354 were overseas.[807] Up to the beginning of the war, the German Reich had not even been developing any long-range strategic assault bomber aircraft, whereas Britain had done so since 1934 and the United States since 1935. [807]

"Thus it was discovered [by British and American economists] that her [Germany's] aircraft production in the autumn of 1939 had been 675 a month, no more than that of Great Britain; her tank production was less; she had started the war with only three months' supply of aviation petrol."[808]

"It was Britain placing the strongest emphasis on strategic aerial warfare, having already on 1 April 1918 created the RAF as an independent part of the armed forces, their command clearly separated from that of the army and the navy. Britain had already at that time formed several bomber units into an 'Independent Air Force' for a strategic air war and had been continuing this development since 1925. The aircraft best suited to this purpose was considered to be the heavy, strongly armed long-range bomber, which it had been developing since 1934 and which had been in series production since 1936, so that by 1941 it was available, at long last, in sufficient number for aerial warfare.

Long before 1939, Britain's purposeful groundwork was geared to this task, and it incorporated in its plan for an aerial war against Germany a fixed sequence for striking targets, and which, from its inception, allowed for a considerable span of time to ensure success." [807]

"The Germans had never planned for independent [of the front line troops] bombing. Their bomber force was an auxiliary for the army on the ground, and they had to improvise the air attack on Great Britain in the summer of 1940."[809]

The following statement also deserves attention:

"Britain was making studies of German industry with a view to strategic aerial attacks for the first time in the mid-twenties. The United States had prepared for entering the European air war with a list which contained 124 targets from the field of electrical power stations, transport systems and the fuel industry, as well as 30 targets from the aviation and light metals industries! Details for the particular bomber units appointed to carrying out the attacks were already set down in 1932 in the United States and Britain."[810]

Hence, Britain and the U.S. were already planning to strategically bomb Germany even before Hitler came to power!

Navy

The German fleet was significantly decreased compared to 1914[811] and was thus inferior to the French and, faced with the "overwhelming Anglo-French superiority... could not venture on the high seas..."[812] There were no aircraft carriers; there were 57 U-boats, of which only 42 were "of any real military value."[813] If one takes into account that less than a third of the total number of U-boats can be "on mission" (enemy engagement), while the remaining ones are either outward-bound or on their return journey or at the shipyard for overhauling or are assigned to training purposes, then the small number of German U-boats in 1939 diminishes even further.

"However, not more than half were large enough and sufficiently broken in for action in the Atlantic. In fact, eighteen [U-boats] were sent into action against England at the start of war, and three others put to sea in the Baltic to support the operations against Poland." [812]

"From 1933 to 1938, the German Navy had made no plans looking toward a high seas fleet which could rival that of England."[814]

Compared with the 57 very much smaller German U-boats, Britain and France had 135 submarines at the beginning of the war.[815] German Admiral of the Fleet Raeder had this to add:

"Our two battleships and 3 armoured cruisers were facing a total of 22 British and French battleships. We had no aircraft carriers. The enemy, on the other hand, had seven aircraft carriers. We had two heavy cruisers as compared to 22 of the other side. The ratio for the light cruisers was 6:61 and for the destroyers and torpedo boats 34:255."[816]

Winston Churchill stated on 16 March 1939 in the House of Commons:

"The German Navy in the next few years will not be able to form a line of battle for a general engagement."[817]

Winston Churchill in his memoirs:

> "Now [1939] the Germans had only begun rebuilding their navy and had no ability even to form a line of battle…
>
> Thus there was no challenge in surface craft to our command of the seas. There was no doubt that the British Navy was overwhelmingly superior to the German in strength and in numbers, and no reason to assume that its science, training or skill was in any way defective…
>
> It had to face enormous and innumerable duties, rather than an antagonist."[818]

A Soviet source:

> "The German Naval Air Force was totally inadequate in 1939 in Germany."[819]

German Admiral Erich Raeder declared before the Nuremberg tribunal on 17 May 1946:

> "There is manifold proof to show that I was not expecting a war in the autumn [1939] at all, and in view of the small extent of rearmament of the German Navy this was quite natural. I have stated quite clearly in my speech before the U-boat officers in [the German harbour city of] Swinemünde [north of Stettin] that we could not count on it."[820]

Great Britain

In 1939 Great Britain was by no means as scantily provided with armaments or, indeed, orientated to a defensive policy as one is always led to believe. This is established by the fact alone that "British production of airplanes and tanks equaled or exceeded that of National Socialist Germany"[821] – not to mention the navy, unsurpassed in strength and capacity. Before 1914, as well as before 1939, the British Admiralty had to hand plans of attack devised for the destruction of the German fleet and for invasion across the Channel.[822]

Already at the close of 1937 Churchill stated,

> "that the navy was strong and that 'even during the years of disarmament at least £50,000,000 sterling was spent every year upon keeping in order the plant and organisation already stabilized on the largest scale.'"[823]

On 3 October 1938, three days after signing the German-British declaration of peace and friendship, N. Chamberlain was unexpectedly announcing rearmament at all costs.

> "For a long period now we have been engaged in this country in a great rearmament programme, which is daily increasing in pace and volume."[824]

On 22 February 1939, one month before "Prague," he stated in Blackburn:

"The figures (of our rearmament) are indeed staggering. Perhaps they have got so big that people have ceased to be able to take them in."[825]

Even assuming that he was exaggerating, one has to take into consideration that such statements, coming from the mouth of a Prime Minister, would make a lasting impact on the nations "affected." Indeed, they were intended to goad the French ally into an intensified arms build-up. Their effect was to spread the armament fever and a war psychosis to all sides and push toward a crisis.

"Britain had ready six divisions, could, 'in the shortest possible time' transfer another 10 to the Continent, and 'in the second echelon' add another sixteen divisions – in all, therefore, thirty-two divisions. The air forces of Great Britain comprised more than 3,000 first-line aircraft."[826]

On 1 September 1939 Chamberlain declared in the House of Commons:

"The main and most satisfactory point to observe is that there is to-day no need to make an appeal in a general way for recruits such as was issued by Lord Kitchener 25 years ago. That appeal has been anticipated by many months, and the men are already available."[827]

With her many Dominions and England-friendly nations in all parts of the world, ocean-ruling Albion was able to procure raw materials and armaments even in time of war. In 1939, the volume of armament of the British Isles was already roughly on a par with that of the level of Germany. Proportionate to the population (Germany = 80 million, England = 50 million people), it was even twice as much. In addition, in the case of war, Germany was left at the mercy of an effective blockade. Britannia, on the other hand, ruled the waves. If one wants to assess the armament potential of Britain, France and Germany in the year 1939, one has to take these political, strategic and geographical factors into account.

Likewise, one has to bear in mind that the British War Cabinet had based their strategy on a lengthy war. England was using a minimum of her own forces, at least at the beginning of the war, while she was proposing to enter into the fray the armies of her allies instead. Furthermore, this is not inconsistent with Chamberlain's initial notion that Hitler could be defeated easily and quickly with the support of the resistance within his own ranks: in this case also, Britain would not require an overpoweringly large army contingent on the continent.

"At the beginning of September 1939, the British War Cabinet stated that the war would go on for three years, and prepared a plan of mobilisation for the reserves, based on this time scale.

This plan proposed an increase of the fleet, the creation of 55 divisions by the autumn of 1941, as well as the expansion of the fleet of aircraft to 12,000 planes by spring 1940. Germany's

situation with regard to the essential kinds of strategic raw materials was considered to be extremely serious: According to British plans there were stocks for only 6 months…

The principal method of economic warfare against Germany, for which plans had been drawn up since spring of 1939, was the naval-blockade. It was to be translated into action by the Home Fleet in the North Sea, in the Mediterranean and in parts of the Baltic."[828]

Already several years before the war, "an advisory committee for trade enquiries in wartime" was set up in Britain. These so-called "blockade planners" had worked out plans for a blockade against three hypothetical opponents already in 1937: Germany, Italy and Japan.[829] The world-wide scale of these measures bears an impressive testimony to the balance of power at a time, when the real concern in Germany was how to achieve good housekeeping of raw materials (as there was much too little of it), and other countries had already begun cancelling trade agreements with Germany, particularly those covering nonferrous metals. In 1937, the Association of German Heavy Industries had written a memorandum, the contents of which were secretly passed on to the British government by Dr. Goerdeler, estimating that Germany fell short of her requirements for raw materials by 40-60%, had a shortage of 25-30% in food stuffs and animal feeds, and her exports had shrunk by one-third.

"The maximum home output in the next four years would not produce more than 50 per cent of iron and steel requirements, 70 per cent of zinc, 45 per cent of lead, and 15 per cent of copper. Home production of raw materials was not more than 25 per cent of Germany's needs." [829]

France

In August 1939 France's mobilisation was practically completed. Winston Churchill spoke of 5 million trained French soldiers.[830] On 28 August, the British Ambassador in Paris, Phipps, reported to London a conversation with French Foreign Minister Bonnet:

"M. Bonnet was calm and seemed not altogether unhopeful of the possibility of maintaining peace. He thinks it curious that Hitler should have allowed the mobilisation of about 2,700,000 French combatants without striking beforehand. Of the total of about 5,500,000 men that general mobilisation would produce, there would be little more than half a million more combatants, the remainder being composed of persons fulfilling war services in the rear, etc."[831]

The Soviet Ambassador in London was well informed of the French fighting strength:

"France [in 1939] had at her disposal 110 divisions without reckoning its anti-aircraft forces, its coastal defence forces and its troops in Africa. In addition there were about 200,000 soldiers of Republican Spain, who had taken refuge in France after the victory of Franco and had asked to be

incorporated in the French forces. The French Army possessed 4,000 modern tanks and 3,000 large-calibre guns of 150 mm and higher (without reckoning divisional artillery). The French Air Force consisted of 2,000 first-line aircraft, of which about two-thirds were modern as then understood – namely, aircraft with a speed of 450-500 km. per hour in the case of fighters and 400-450 km. in the case of bombers." [826]

France had at her disposal in June 1940 – not counting Britain, Holland and Belgium – a much stronger tank force than Germany had.[832] Before their entry into the war, England and France had spent – each country individually – as much or more on rearmaments than had Germany.[833]

"The total war expenditure for Britain and France, having been standardised along military points, in accord with the existing agreements and obligations, were in the year 1939 much above those of Germany. At the outbreak of war in September 1939, France had a considerably bigger army than Germany, well equipped and securely entrenched behind the famous, imposing and, as was believed, impregnable Maginot Line."[834]

Czecho-Slovakia (1938)

"Between thirty and forty Czech divisions were deploying upon Germany's eastern frontier, and the weight of the French Army, at odds of nearly eight to one, began to lie heavy on the Western Wall. A hostile Russia might operate from Czech airfields, and Soviet armies might wend their way forward through Poland or Rumania."[835]

The Czech army, whose peacetime footing amounted to 120,000 men,[836] had in midsummer 1938 a million and a half men under arms in the thirty to forty divisions (twenty-one regular divisions, fifteen or sixteen second-line divisions already mobilised[837]), equipped "by a highly organised and powerful industrial machine," standing "behind the strongest fortress line in Europe."[838]

"To break the Czech Army and pierce or turn the Bohemian fortress line would require practically the whole of thirty-five divisions – the main strength of the mobile and fully-trained German Army... Thus at the moment of attacking the Czechs, only five effective and eight reserve divisions would be available to protect the whole of Germany's western frontier against the French army, which could mobilise a hundred divisions." [837+[839]]

"The Czechoslovak army was a formidable force, its well-equipped 34 divisions probably a match in themselves for the half-trained German army of 1938."[840]

Poland

The strength of the Polish army at the beginning of war was estimated, as is generally acknowledged, at about 55 infantry divisions, 12 cavalry brigades and two motorised units.[841] In autumn 1939 Poland had at her disposal 1.5 million soldiers. Having reached the already quite sizeable

number of 200,000 (211,000 men) in the Polish peacetime army, [836] a comparison of the figures clearly demonstrates the aggressive intentions of the Polish army, whose gradual mobilisation had been underway since spring 1939; especially when considering that this mobilisation was undertaken without having been threatened or, indeed, having been made to feel threatened by Germany. In spring, on 25 March 1939, the British Ambassador in Warsaw, Kennard, told his Foreign Minister that, according to confidential information from competent persons, 750,000 men had already been called up.[842] The Polish air force had more than 1,200 planes at its disposal in autumn 1939.[843]

Without a doubt, the Polish military was still set fast in outdated strategic and technical ideas: they were attaching too much importance to the cavalry, underestimated the enemy's capabilities, had at their disposal insufficient tanks, anti-tank guns, artillery, aircraft and anti-aircraft units. Furthermore, their strategic immobility, the absence of any defensive strategy whatsoever, the poor fighting spirit of the many soldiers of the ethnic minorities in the Polish army (only 52.7% of the population of Poland were Polish) and, not least, the illusion being entertained by Warsaw regarding their "friends" France, Britain and the United States, have all contributed considerably to the catastrophe of September 1939. All the same, the fact remains that, in an evaluation of Poland's military potential before the outbreak of war, the German leadership could not have taken all of these deficiencies into account while, on the other hand, the Polish leadership had not been aware of these shortcomings. The Polish leadership had geared their policy toward the deployment of a strong military force – and expressed in figures it was considerable for this state! – and any German Chancellor would have had to respond bearing this policy in mind – and not any perchance weaknesses of the Polish army.

The Soviet Union

While the German Reich in 1939 had 75 divisions, 1,000 operational aircraft (tactical air force) and 3,000 tanks at her disposal, the Soviet Union alone could boast, in the summer of 1939, that she could deploy at a moment's notice, for the fight against Germany on her western front, 136

divisions, 5,000 medium and heavy guns, 9,000 to 10,000 tanks and more than 5,000 (according to some sources 5,500) aeroplanes.[844]

This was no mere showing-off: The Soviet Union had formally volunteered these forces during the British-French-Russian military convention in July/August 1939 to the Western Powers for immediate fighting against Germany – which also reveals a lot about the attitude of mind of the Soviets, who were undertaking the completion of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact at the same time, on 23 August 1939. Not because of the refusal by Britain or France, but mainly because of the Polish and the Rumanian refusal to allow passage of the Red Army across their territory, did these negotiations founder, so that the enormous might of the Red Army did not go into action in Europe in the year 1939. That this offer of deployment of arms was proposed in earnest is also confirmed by Soviet historians. They affirm that the Soviet government "during the whole course of the pre-war period was prepared to use armed force against Germany (the 'aggressor')."[845]

> "The Red Army had been vastly increased in recent months...
> The incorporation of reserve units in the Red Army in late 1938 had increased the Russian peacetime army to two million men, which was nearly triple the number of peacetime German soldiers."[846]

During the years from 1934 to 1938, the Red Army had doubled their manpower and their fighting strength, according to a statement made by the former Soviet Defence Commissar, Voroshilov, on 13 March 1939. The vast USSR, the most militant country in the world, had for years been shifting the main emphasis of the industrial output onto the heavy and armaments industries, and already since the year 1937 was spending about 25% of the total Soviet gross domestic product on military purposes (Germany 1937 = 10%, 1938/39 = 15%).[847]

Psychological Preparations for War

In view of all these facts, what form did the anti-German propaganda take?

Winston Churchill would begin his agitating by making false statements, against his better judgment, as soon as he touched upon his favourite theme of "German rearmament." Then these assertions of his, proven to be false, were not only taken up by world-wide propaganda – "a free press" – but also by governments that used them for their own ends: principally Britain, France, the United States and the USSR.

So, for example, in a speech to Churchill's constituent on 27 August 1938:

> "But the danger to peace will not be removed until the vast German armies which have been called from their homes into the ranks have been dispersed. For a country which is itself not menaced by anyone, in no fear of anyone, to place over fifteen hundred thousand soldiers upon a war footing is a very grave step ... It seems to me, and I must tell it to you plainly, that these great forces have not been placed upon a war footing without an intention to reach a conclusion within a very limited space of time..."[848]

For those weak with figures, fifteen hundred thousand is 1.5 million. Several pages further Churchill informs us that the Czechs alone in May 1938 had called 1.5 million men to the colours; however, this fact is not embellished with a similarly tinted commentary. When the Czecho-Slovakian multinational state with a population of 15 million (of these, only 7 million were Czechs) mobilised 1.5 million men, then this, apparently, is considered to be quite all right. When Poland with her population of 35 million (15 million of them were foreign minorities) likewise mobilises 1.5 million men, then this, too, is considered to be quite right. But for Germany and her 80 million people to have, in the face of an intensifying crisis, just a selfsame size army of 1.5 million, which is in proportion to the population only a fifth part of the Czech contingent – this then is seen by Churchill and the people who share his views as a peace-threatening crime and a proof of her striving for world-domination. Churchill in a speech in 1936:

> "Germany, on the other hand, fears no one. She is arming in a manner which has never been seen in German history. She is led by a handful of triumphant desperados. Money is running short, discontents are arising beneath these despotic rulers. Very soon they will have to choose on the one hand between economic and financial collapse or internal upheaval, and on the other a war which could have no other object and which, if successful, can have no other result than a Germanised Europe under Nazi control. Therefore it seems to me that all the old conditions

present themselves again [the striving for hegemony of a continental power that must be eradicated] and that our national salvation depends upon our gathering once again all the forces of Europe to contain, to restrain, and if necessary to frustrate German domination."[849]

In his memoirs Churchill frankly stated:

"In 1938-39 British military expenditure of all kinds reached £304 millions, and [the] German was at least £1,500 millions. It is probable that, in this last year before the outbreak, Germany manufactured at least double, and possibly treble, the munitions of Britain and France put together, and also that her great plants for tank production reached full capacity. They were therefore getting weapons at a far higher rate than we."[850]

"The French forty-hour week could not rival the output of a Germany working harsh hours under wartime conditions. ...

The German munitions plants were working at high pressure. The wheels revolved and the hammers descended day and night in Germany, making its whole industry an arsenal, and welding all its population into one disciplined war machine."[851]

What Churchill was proposing to arrange with the help of his mendacious agitation about the German rearmament, he explained in the House of Commons debate on 16 March 1939 quite openly, garnished with all too common lies:

"It must be remembered that Germany, like all countries, is now at full extension in armament production, groaning and straining in that tremendous effort. Already she is spending 26 per cent of her national income on warlike preparations. All labour, skilled and unskilled, is employed to the utmost. The park railings and even iron crosses in the graveyards are being melted down as scrap....

Therefore, I was very glad to hear Lord Chatfield yesterday lay down the sound doctrine that it is the duty of the Royal Navy to 'seek out and destroy the enemy's fleet.' That is the true note to strike."[852]

To be any more prejudiced and provocative is all but impossible! But even the fact that this man, in one and the same book, was contradicting himself with such frequency, even when discussing the matter of German armament and that here, too, "Winston could produce this sort of schoolboy rhetoric by the yard,"[853] did not seem to bother anyone:

"The German war machine had lumbered falteringly over the frontier [German-Austrian frontier, March 1938] and come to a standstill near Linz. In spite of perfect weather and road conditions, the majority of the tanks broke down. Defects appeared in the motorised heavy artillery. The road from Linz to Vienna was blocked with heavy vehicles at a standstill. General von Reichenau ... was deemed responsible for a breakdown which exposed the unripe conditions of the German Army at this stage in its reconstruction."[854]

On the occasion of a meeting at the War Ministry, the leading German generals drew up a memorandum, which was presented to the Reich Chancellery on 27 September 1938. Churchill confirms:

"Emphasis is laid on the shortage of officers. No fewer than forty-eight thousand officers and a hundred thousand N.C.O.s were necessary to bring the [German] army up to war strength, and in

the event of a general mobilisation, no fewer than eighteen divisions would find themselves devoid of trained subordinate commanders."[855]

Also "anti-Fascist historians" need to be tied down to the question of the German rearmament, so that they must discuss their assertions in some detail. Thus, a book published under U.S. license in the year 1947 contains the following brief reference:

"The vast majority of the population knew nothing of secret meetings and secret orders."[856]

Here too, not a single word is to be found about the subject matter or about questions relating to work and to personnel matters of the alleged secret meetings and orders in connection with the German rearmament. But such empty pronouncements are historically worthless. The author continues:

"The number of firms that was working on certain armament projects was a limited one before 1939, the work itself was 'screened off.'" [856]

Here, likewise, no amount, no locality and no product is mentioned. Important, however, is the admission that the number of German firms engaged in rearmaments was until 1939 a limited number, a statement contradicting all of the inflammatory theories of propaganda. Continuing (one needs to pay close attention to the line of reasoning):

"There are grounds for the supposition that the stated economic program of the party was designed according to the demands of rearmament and war; in this the 'autarky' of the German economy was to be all-important… New industrial plants of vast dimensions emerged, which were to produce BUNA as a substitute for rubber, make petrol from coal and, allegedly, manufacture the Volkswagen, so as to free the German economy from dependency on foreign countries…

The financing [of the thought-out plan for these large-scale measures], which was assuming gigantic proportions, was a job in itself that was solved by increasing the volume of currency in circulation and by increasing the deficit spending of the Reich." [856]

If these measures that any country in the world would catalogue under "national economy" and not under "political armament" were indeed "devouring sums of gigantic proportions needed for the financing," then, by all accounts, there should not have been much space and financial strength left over for the actual rearming. What in fact was the reality?

"The expansion of the 'four-year plan factories' which were to reduce the dependency on imports had been planned to be fully developed only in 1943. Their present capacity in output [1939] was of no consequence."[857]

No matter which historical research we look at, everywhere we find the very low German armaments level confirmed – just as we find the

systematic inciting of other nations with lies about the "feverish rearming of the Third Reich from 1933 onward," and that the "ending of the economic crisis in Germany (1933) was accomplished by a fully developed armament program, thereby threatening the peace of the nations."

In the opinion of these moralists, what might a sovereign state be allowed at all? Should it be permitted to rearm for self-defence? As we can see, all the others "may" do so – but not the Germans. Germany was encircled by hostile nations that were expertly equipped and better armed, bound to each other by military alliances. During the whole period that the Reich government was in office, "not one single new munitions factory was built." Nonetheless, those selfsame powers that were exploiting world empires, were accusing Germany of aspiring to world domination, of conspiring against peace and of being guilty of criminal planning.

Any of the facts that stand in contradiction to the thesis of a "conspiracy against world peace" are, without further ado – one is never at a loss for "reasons" and slogans – clarified as the "amateurism" of the conspiracy.[858] Perhaps Hitler could have avoided being reproached of "amateurism," if he had been – emulating the United States after the Second World War – stockpiling 75% of all strategic material reserves for 3 to 5 years, and if he had taken up position in 69 countries of the globe or rather in over 2,200 individual bases throughout the world[859] – never mind the even more awe-inspiring example of the Soviet Union.

The powers surrounding Germany were not, incidentally, filled with dread because of a "Third Reich armed to the teeth," but instead were cherishing the illusion to be standing in Berlin within a matter of days after the outbreak of war, aided by their "friends" as well as the power of resistance from within the Reich.

Had the Poles, the French, the British or the Soviets been in fear of German armaments or the German determination for attack, then in the year 1939 the Polish public and the Polish authorities would not have behaved with such unconcealed aggression, recklessness, prejudice and hatred toward the German minorities at their mercy and toward the Reich. Likewise, the French, the British, the U.S.-American and the Soviet press organs would not have dared any such provocations. Whoever fears the other side because of greater strength would not deliberately trample upon the other's legitimate rights, but would carefully weigh them in the balance,

because then, within the bounds of all human probability, the threat of the use of arms has vanished.

In the British Cabinet one was fully aware of the true level of the German armament; after all, reliable sources of information were at London's disposal. That is why it is all the more unforgivable, when influential men in Britain – to say nothing of the "free press" and the BBC – during the thirties employed inflammatory agitation about "German rearmament fever," although in private they assessed the German armament and military forces potential as realistically, as did, for example, Robert Hudson, Secretary of the Department for Overseas Trade, on 9 March 1939 during lunch with the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski:

> "As for the Germans, they were bound to come to terms since they were on the verge of bankruptcy, having no gold or foreign currency and being increasingly short of raw materials."[860]

The Swedish mediator Birger Dahlerus, certainly above suspicion, was writing with regard to the assessment of the German Wehrmacht made by the Polish propaganda during midsummer 1939:

> "The German Panzers [tanks] were said to be only cardboard dummies. The German soldiers were said to be deserting in their hundreds. Their uniforms were only barely said to be held together with cords."[861]

There is not a single document to verify that Poland in 1939 believed in a supposed armaments fever or in a striving for world-domination in Germany! Polish diplomats even used to regard the signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939 as clear evidence of "the desperate situation in which the Reich found itself."[862]

> "Adding to this [the unleashing of anti-German feelings because of measures taken by the Polish authorities] was the ever worsening warmongering in the Polish press and on the radio, where one could not publicise the reports fast enough about the alleged manifestations of the German condition of exhaustion to be observed within the Reich, in the sphere of foodstuffs, in the inadequately equipped Wehrmacht and suchlike. The Poles, however, were portrayed as 'the best soldiers in the world,' thereby arousing in them a feeling of infinite superiority compared with the Reich. It was believed that the structure of the Polish army, their fighting spirit and their technical equipment, to be 'immeasurably better,' whereas the situation of the Reich, in contrast, was hopeless, since the encirclement was complete. Poland considered herself a Great Power…"[863]

These words were not written in the period from 1933 to 1945. It is the result of a historical research by an expert who, in his book on the German minority in Poland published in 1954, entitled the relevant chapter "Warmongering in Poland" ("*Die Kriegshetze in Polen*").

Paul Reynaud, the former French Finance Minister (Prime Minister from March to June 1940), said in the Chamber of Deputies on 26 February 1938:

> "Is it not common knowledge that the Germans do not have half the officers required for the formation of their divisions?"[864]

Likewise, in the year 1938 (November), a manifesto of the Comintern was published, stating:

> "Hitler-Germany is neither in the military nor in the economic sense ready for war. She is short of raw materials, foodstuffs, money… Her army does not have enough trained units…"[865]

These are statements made by influential and well informed politicians – one year before the "war to win world domination" allegedly planned since 1933!

The Soviet Ambassador in London recalled the diplomatic talks between the representatives of the Soviet Union, Britain and France in the months before the outbreak of war, and he drew the conclusion that was equally familiar to all the participants of the talks:

> "It will be seen that the armed forces of the anticipated signatories of the triple pact were very impressive, and far surpassed the then forces of Germany and Italy."[866]

How did the French Foreign Minister assess the situation?

> "We were expecting an easy and quick victory. It must be admitted that much information from abroad led us to believe that our adversary was quite badly off indeed. I received such bits of news either directly or from our ambassador, who, as was his duty, sent them to us with due reservation.
>
> Apart from the usual old tales of striking German workers and soldiers who refused to fight, we were periodically provided with the hope of an imminent assassination, already prepared, which would bring about the downfall of National Socialism."[867]

And the British Foreign Minister?

> "It became more and more apparent to one as Halifax talked ... that, what Britain depends on more than anything else to end the war before the world collapses, is the internal collapse inside of Germany. They had definite confidence in their secret service reports that the oil and gasoline supply is definitely not over four months and that there is a definite feeling in Germany against war and if it got too tough economically, Hitler would be out."[868]

The former Foreign Minister of the Reich, Joachim von Ribbentrop, in his closing remarks to the IMT in Nuremberg, pertinently outlined the situation of the Reich:

> "If I deny that this German foreign policy planned and prepared for a war of aggression, that is not an excuse on my part. The truth of this is proved by the strength that we developed in the course of the second World War and the fact how weak we were at the beginning of this war.
>
> History will believe us when I [Ribbentrop] say that we would have prepared a war of aggression immeasurably better if we had actually intended one. What we intended was to look after our elementary necessities of life, in the same way that England looked after her own

interests in order to make one-fifth of the world subject to her, and in the same way that the United States brought an entire continent and Russia brought the largest inland territory of the world under their hegemony. The only difference between the policies of these countries as compared with ours is that we demanded parcels of land such as Danzig and the Corridor which were taken from us against all rights, whereas the other powers are accustomed to thinking only in terms of continents."[869]

The Foreign Policy of the Great Powers on the Eve of War

Great Britain

The Policy of "European Balance of Power" during the Pre-War Years

Winston Churchill describes to us in his memoirs with rare frankness the basic principles of British foreign policy before the Second World War. According to these, from the outset one thing is for certain for any Englishman, and that is that any European Great Power – no matter at what moment in time or under what circumstances or in what system of government – was going to be "aggressive" and ruled over by "tyrants" as soon as it had attained a certain degree of strength and internal stability. Upon these premises a "policy rule" is constructed, and Britain's foreign policy is always conducted in conformity with it, thereby not only "guaranteeing" perpetual disagreement within Europe, but she has also been using it for administering "justice" among the nations. Yes indeed, Churchill even admitted that for him – and thus for British policy – there was no difference between the "Hitler regime" and the various other forms of government encountered in European history. This leading Englishman thus acknowledges that his own "crusader" role was devoid of any justification and not bound to any ethical values. Over and above that, he admits that the British foreign policy had, for the past 400 years, not been orientated toward rights and justice, nor humanitarian sentiments or international understanding, but was rather geared to an autocratic "principle," whereby all other states would be declared, according to demand, tyrannical, aggressive and criminal.

> "For four hundred years the foreign policy of England has been to oppose the strongest, most aggressive, most dominating Power on the Continent...
>
> Faced by Philip II of Spain, against Louis XIV under William III and Marlborough, against Napoleon, against William II of Germany, we joined with the less strong Powers, made a combination among them, and thus defeated and frustrated the continental military tyrant whoever he was, whatever nation he led…
>
> Observe that the policy of England takes no account of which nation it is that seeks the overlordship of Europe. The question is not whether it is Spain, or the French Monarchy, or the

French Empire, or the German Empire, or the Hitler regime. It has nothing to do with rulers or nations, it is concerned solely with whoever is the strongest or the potentially dominating tyrant. Therefore we should not be afraid of being accused of being pro-French or anti-German. If the circumstances were reversed, we could equally be pro-German and anti-French..."[870]

No British historian, no British government has ever denied these observations made by Churchill. On the contrary! Lord Halifax, in his speech on 30 June 1939 at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, expressed himself in a similar sense.[871] Exactly the same is said in the memorandum that the U.S. State Department presented to President Truman before the start of the Potsdam conference (July 1945) in order to inform him about the British tradition of the "policy of balance."[872]

Lord Vansittart, for many years the highest civil servant in the Foreign Office and later Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the government, also confirms:

"If such a domination [of a continental power] were established, we should be confronted with a position which we have for centuries endeavoured to prevent with the instinctive knowledge that any lasting hegemony in Europe must of necessity reduce this country [Britain] to a second-class power."[873]

Churchill's statement demonstrates to the world that also in the Second World War ethical principles such as "protection of the small nations," "international justice," the "struggle for freedom and democracy," "safeguards against tyrants" were nothing but propaganda slogans for Britain. It is grotesque for a country such as Britain that in 1939 still had at her disposal 40 million square kilometres, was ruling over a large number of foreign nations and, moreover, was claiming the ocean for herself, that she should pose as "defender of the rights of small nations" and of the "free world." It is no less grotesque that these British politicians should accuse a nation that had only 600,000 square kilometres to call her own, that is to say 1.5 per cent of that of the British landholding, of "striving for world domination" – and, furthermore, that they were believed!

Even on the occasion when Churchill becomes still more explicit and calls the Second World War a "British war" (with this line of reasoning, as used on BBC London, he refused the peace negotiation proposals from the Belgian King and from the Queen of the Netherlands made after the campaign of Poland in 1939) and declares as its aim the "annihilation of Germany,"[874] the public world-wide chooses to disregard this without any comment to be heard, as indeed later, after the war, his cynical admission

that one had, unfortunately, "killed the wrong pig," was also passed over in silence. Thus, "world opinion" seems hardly a suitable yardstick for international law.

Even a diplomat from Churchill's own Conservative Party admitted:

> "To the world at large, Churchill appeared to be the very embodiment of a policy of war. To have brought him into the Government when the balance between peace and war was still quivering, might have definitively tilted the scales on the side of war."[875]

A pretext for justifying their antagonistic attitude has always been found in British politics. The Versailles dictate had put a noose around the neck of the Weimar Republic and had plunged the German nation into strife and economic chaos, although they had made the democratic form of government their own. The new German liberal constitution did not result in even the smallest hint of clemency and consideration. But when this chaos gave way to dictatorship, that very change served as the pretext for a new war. In the words of the Englishman, William H. Dawson:

> "The fact that there was in 1933 a completely different Germany from what her enemies had planned, can be explained in that the Allies had done their utmost to weaken and destroy Germany – physically by dismembering her, financially with the reparations, in her reputation with misrepresentations and defamation, in her spirit with a heap of insults and humiliations of every conceivable means…
>
> Therefore, in view of the misery that the Weimar Republic had to suffer from 1919 to 1932, researchers arrived at the conclusion that it was a miracle to have survived those years of distress and disgrace."[876]

When the Germans could see a way out of this chaos, National Socialism simply had to be made into the "villain," from this time onward, so that the treatment of the Germans as inferior beings and outcasts could be "justified" once more. Once again British, French and U.S. politicians and newspaper publishers, in conjunction with the Soviets, got worked up over the "eternal troublemaker." They put the responsibility for the looming war unto the German government, "should they continue rearming," even at a time when Germany, in contrast to her neighbours, was totally defenceless.[877] They were the ones who, with an enormous outpouring of propaganda, got to work on classifying the nations into good ones and bad ones, into peace-loving and aggressive systems of government and, by means of alleged secret information, were feigning an "imminent danger" that was threatening different countries.

The British Foreign Secretary Eden was already quite blunt during a talk with the Polish Marshal Pilsudski in the year 1935 by asking him:

"Do you think, Monsieur le Maréchal, we should remain on our little island?"[878]

Similar the highest civil servant in the Foreign Office, Vansittart, in the year 1933:

"If Hitler fails, his successor will be Bolshevism [power-political depreciation of the German area]; if he succeeds, he will have a European War in five years."[879]

At the same time, that is to say in the year 1933, this same Vansittart had already drawn up a memorandum that had but one purpose: *Germania esse delenda* (Germany must be destroyed).[880]

This man had for years held the highest civil servant position in the Foreign Office, and also in the Chamberlain government he continued exercising his influence, in spite of the fact that Chamberlain removed him from his post in 1938 and tried to put him on ice with the appointment of Chief Diplomatic Advisor of the British government. Since any German unity was objectionable[881] to these people anyway, the resurfacing German strength that was becoming more and more noticeable due to Germany's regeneration eventually had to serve once again as the pretext for interfering on the grounds that it was disturbing the "balance of power." This despite the fact the Reich at this time – in contrast to the period before the First World War – had not participated in the armament race,[882] and Germany's foreign trade was not about to create havoc on the world market. Yet Germany had become too powerful for their liking, although they had managed to create an armaments lead of several years and to once more put a cordon of alliances, formed by the victorious nations of World War One, around the vanquished nation. The British Defence Committee – and this is characteristic – had already decided as early as the spring of 1934, at a time when it was a verifiable fact that Germany did not have the military might on a par with Great Britain and was not making any territorial demands, that the "ultimate potential enemy" in a general war would be Germany.[883] Countless prominent personalities in Britain, France and the United States explained their anti-German attitude with the mere fact of a Germany having become too powerful.

Foreign Secretary Eden declared in 1943, at a farewell breakfast for Soviet Ambassador Maisky, who was leaving London to take up the post as Deputy Commissioner for Foreign Affairs in Moscow:

"During the last century and a half England and Russia have always been in the same camp when any serious crisis arose in Europe. That is what happened in the time of Napoleon, it was the

same in the years of the First World War, and it has happened now in the days of the Second World War. What is the explanation? It is that Britain and Russia are two great and powerful States at opposite ends of Europe who cannot reconcile themselves to the creation in Europe of the unquestioned domination of any third power. Such an excessively powerful third State becomes a menace both to Britain and to Russia – and as a result they unite against it and ultimately bring about its downfall."[884]

Even when among his friends, Mr. Eden was not in the habit of dwelling on the particularly abysmal depravity of National Socialism in comparison with other forms of government and different epochs in Europe. He too held the view of his Prime Minister that there was "no difference between Philip II of Spain, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm II and Hitler." What alone was crucial was the "Balance of Power in Europe"!

Winston Churchill, who "after a brilliant political career had been exchanging a long list of ministerial seats up to the highest that the British governmental hierarchy has to allocate, that of Chancellor of the Exchequer (1924-1929)," told the Soviet Ambassador in London, Maisky, at the end of July 1934:

"'The British Empire,' said Churchill, 'is my be-all and end-all. What is good for the British Empire is good for me too; what is bad for the British Empire is bad for me…

In 1919 I considered that the greatest danger to the British Empire was your country, and therefore I was an enemy of your country. Now I consider that the greatest danger for the British Empire is Germany, and therefore now I am an enemy of Germany. At the same time I consider that Hitler is making ready to expand not only against us but also to the east, against you. Why should we not join forces to combat our common enemy? I have been an adversary of Communism, and remain its adversary, but for the sake of the integrity of the British Empire I am ready to co-operate with the Soviets.'"[885]

This distrust of Germany did not only apply to German might as a political factor, but equally to her economic potential and to her intellectual prowess. Already in the year 1919 "*The Times*" had written:

"If Germany were to start trading within the next 50 years, then we would have fought this war [First World War] for nothing."[886]

The British historian and General, J.F.C. Fuller, said in retrospect that it was not Hitler's political teachings that provoked the war; the cause, this time, was his successful endeavour to construct a changed economy.[887]

"It is in the envies, greeds and fears of men that the roots of war are to be found." [887]

The British diplomat Lord Lothian, future Ambassador to the USA, had written to a friend on 23 July 1936:

"My whole point is that you cannot deal with Nazi Germany until you give her justice. Once you have given her justice, two things may happen. On the one hand, the moderate forces in

Germany may begin to resist. On the other hand, Great Britain may be willing to consider making war, if Germany proceeds to action which may lead to the hegemony of Europe."[888]

Winston Churchill in the year 1936:

"We will force Hitler into the war, whether he wants it or not."[889]

Then on 18 January 1945 and again in Fulton after the war, in March 1946, in the presence of President Truman, Churchill stated:

"It was [the Second World War] also about the acquisition of the German markets."[890]

From a conversation of Churchill with the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt, at the beginning of 1937:

"Churchill was telling me that Germany was again getting too strong, the Germans were only impressed by power; in the event of an armed conflict, the excessive encroachments of National Socialism would help the British to a strong system of alliances."[891]

The simple fact that a great and competent people had found themselves again was to be used as an exaggerated propaganda slogan of "excessive encroachments" (at the beginning of 1937!) by utilising the rumours that the selfsame London central office was circulating throughout the world. The aim was obvious: the forming of an alliance system for smashing Germany to pieces.

American General Robert E. Wood stated at a Senate committee that Churchill had said to him in November 1936:

"Germany is getting too strong, and we must smash her."[892]

This is not the only evidence. Churchill gave his opinion quite openly in a conversation with the former German Ambassador in London, von Ribbentrop, in the summer of 1937:

Churchill:

"If Germany gets too strong, she will be crushed again [as in 1914]."

Ribbentrop:

"This will not be quite so easy this time, as Germany has friends."

Churchill:

"Oh, we are pretty good at getting them round at the end."[893]

"You must not underrate England... Do not judge by the attitude of the present administration. Once a great cause is presented to the people, all kinds of unexpected actions might be taken by this very government and by the British nation."[894]

The IMT in Nuremberg, like the British governments of the post-war period, have declared the documentary papers of this conversation as

nowhere to be found. However, there is much that speaks in favour of the statement's authenticity:

a. The non-existence of any documentary papers about this conversation in either the British or in the captured German archives.
b. The absence of any documents to the contrary relating to this conversation which, after all, did take place.
c. The refusal of the IMT Nuremberg to examine Churchill as a witness.
d. Churchill's acknowledgement in his memoirs.

Therefore, the unsuccessful application in Nuremberg by the defence counsel of Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, bearing in mind the situation of the Reich government at that time, has a legitimate significance in the light of *realpolitik*:

> "On the basis of this statement of Churchill which has been mentioned, and those of other important British statesmen, according to which England would bring about a coalition against Germany within a few years in order to oppose Hitler with all available means—as a result of these statements, Hitler became henceforth more keenly anxious to increase his own armaments and to busy himself with strategic plans."[895]

Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty, opened the Commons debate on the outcome of the Munich conference on 3 October 1938:

> "He insisted that she [Great Britain] would have been fighting for the balance of power, which was precious to some British hearts. He believed that it was his mission and that of his country to prevent Germany from achieving a dominant position on the continent."[896]

The British historian A.J.P. Taylor confirms:

> "The most outspoken opponents of Munich, such as Winston Churchill, asserted quite simply that Germany was becoming too powerful in Europe and that she must be stopped by the threat of a great coalition or, if necessary, by force of arms... Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty,… when he resigned in protest against the Munich settlement ... was concerned with the Balance of Power and British honour, not with self-determination or the injustices of Versailles."[897]

The fundamental attitude of these factions had already been definitely decided in this direction months, if not years, before the Munich conference. The Polish Undersecretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, Count Szembek, had noted in his diary on 7 July 1938:

> "[Vansittart] is the main force behind the encirclement policy against Germany which is guided and promoted by certain elements of the British government...
>
> They would also like us to be a part of the encirclement policy of Germany and, therefore, encourage the pressure put upon us in this regard by all the British factions of the left, which … are combining now into a party of war, and who are even endorsing the idea of a preventive war..."[898]

The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, had revealed these interrelations in his memoirs already with reference to February 1938, and he spoke of "pressures" being exerted on him:

> "Almost every day I would receive unsolicited advice to take some action, of which the plain consequence, if the bluff did not succeed, was to make it rather more likely that the issue must be war."[899]

The Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, reported in his memoirs on a lunch with Churchill on 28 September 1938, the eve of the Munich conference:

> "... and we afterwards drove together to the House of Commons. Churchill declared that the only hope lay in resolution and if necessary in war, and threatened that, if Chamberlain once again decided on an inglorious retreat, he, Churchill, would 'show him.'"[900]

The following day, Halifax was meeting his Prime Minister returning from Munich at London Airport. While accompanying him back to the City, Halifax recommended that he should take this man – Churchill – back into the Cabinet, along with some particularly belligerent officials from the Labour Party, as well as Eden, the former Foreign Secretary, who had resigned in February 1938 because of the course of appeasement.[901] The manner in which Churchill intended to solve the "German problem" was well known in London. If this man could state to the press adviser at the German embassy, Fritz Hesse,

> "If a mad dog is about to attack me, I shall shoot it down before it can bite me,"[902]

– he would have expressed himself in an even blunter way to his colleagues. One of these, Lord Vansittart, did not consider it any the less moral to be saying:

> "But my dear Hesse, you will not be able to prevent a war between Germany and Britain. You see, Mr. Hitler wants to make Germany the supreme power in Europe, and I believe that my information about this is correct. You understand that we cannot allow this to happen." [902]

Indeed, in England

> "historical hatreds were common...; dislike of Germany sprang ... from the attitudes rooted in the past and incapable of moderation."[903]

Winston Churchill never did agree with German "equality of armaments"[904] and – as he was to admit, at least later, in all openness – had been recommending to permanently "prevent the re-armament of Germany."[905] When he was traveling all over in 1936, trying to get all the countries of the League of Nations into "ganging up" against Germany,[906] these travels were, at that time, not as successful as he would have wished.

Although of similar mind, most of the Versailles politicians, moreover, did not want to grant Germany after 1933 the principles of equal rights and the right to self-determination, just as they had also refused to grant them when it was the Weimar Republic. It had to be made clear to the German nation that the fighting of the Allies during the First World War – ostensibly against the German Monarchy – was directed against the German nation as such, despite initial assurances to the contrary. The victors of Versailles wanted to uphold by force – irrespective of the historical research findings to the contrary – the theory of it being exclusively a German war guilt, in order to support their systems of reorganisation from 1919. Winston Churchill was announcing still in 1933 that Germany alone had been responsible for the war and that the Versailles Treaty was just.[907] He never renounced this fundamental basis of his agitation throughout his life; rather he went beyond his thesis in hysterical fashion as the later War Premier, in that he spoke in February 1944 of a "Thirty-Years' War fighting German aggression starting in 1914."[908] Churchill waged war – with weaponry or with words – on the German Empire, the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. But at the same time he was speaking of peace, justice and equality amongst the nations and of an unselfish and peace-loving Britain that would protect the small nations.

Important party followers of Churchill's "European politics" had positions in the Foreign Office, the Civil Service, and were at the helm in the media. They too belonged to that "minority" in Britain who, from 1935,

> "were determined to crush Germany by means of another war, and considered it not only morally justified but also the only correct policy! I was especially astonished at the time that even some Americans – whose names I have forgotten, but among them was also the Ambassador – supported this view fervently."[909]

So it is hardly surprising to find that Lord Halifax was already early on working along lines exactly in accordance with this "Politics of the Balance of Power." Already in August/September 1938 he was interfering in the German-Polish relations with his promise to Foreign Minister Beck that Great Britain would support Poland at Danzig "as much as possible"[910] – at a time when Hitler had not yet taken into consideration talks with Poland about that matter. Halifax made that pledge to the Poles, although he himself liked to describe the Danzig solution, produced at Versailles, as "an

absurdity," [910] and in spite of being informed by his Ambassador in Warsaw to the effect that

> "It is fairly clear that it is only a question of time before Danzig becomes wholly German, and that M. Beck would have great difficulty in inducing the Polish people to swallow this without some quid pro quo."[911]

That the actions of Lord Halifax were orientated toward the long-term with the ultimate aim of breaking the German power is still more drastically shown in that he, at a very early stage, had been encouraging Hitler to make demands, which he would then promptly attack most vehemently with all the means of propaganda and diplomacy, although Hitler was acting according to Halifax's suggestions.

His predecessor at the Foreign Office, Anthony Eden, had already prepared the ground: On 4 May 1937, the British diplomat Lord Lothian visited the German Chancellor for the second time and told him about an official statement that the Foreign Secretary had made during a speech in Leamington (Central England) on 20 November 1936, declaring that Britain "had no primary interests in Eastern Europe." Neither did Britain, so Lothian was affirming, stand in the way of an "Austrian solution." This would more likely be Mussolini and the Pope.[912]

As another envoy from Britain, Lord Halifax arrived to see Hitler on 19 November 1937. He stated the following:

> "The view was held in England that it was perfectly possible to clear out of the way the misunderstandings which existed at the present moment: the great services which the Chancellor had performed in the reconstruction of Germany were fully recognised, and, if the public opinion of England took up an attitude of criticism from time to time towards certain German problems, it might no doubt be in part because people in England were not fully informed of the motives and attendant circumstances of certain measures taken in Germany. Thus the Church of England followed with anxiety and disquiet the development of the Church question in Germany; and Labour Party circles were critical of certain action taken in Germany. In spite of these difficulties, he, Lord Halifax, recognised that the Chancellor had not only performed great services in Germany but also, as he would no doubt feel, had been able, by preventing the entry of Communism into his country, to bar its passage further West…
>
> He [Halifax] said that everyone in England respected Germany as a great and sovereign country and that it was only upon this basis that she would be treated. Englishmen were realists and were perhaps more convinced than others that mistakes had been made in the Treaty of Versailles which had to be put right…
>
> On the English side it was not necessarily thought that the status quo must be maintained under all circumstances. It was recognised that one might have to contemplate an adjustment to new conditions, a correction of former mistakes and the recognition of changed circumstances when such need arose…
>
> He must emphasise once more in the name of H.M. Government that possibility of change of the existing situation was not excluded, but that changes should only take place upon the basis of reasonable agreements reasonably reached…"[913]

A Czech historian put these matters into the following words:

> "The German documents reveal that Hitler derived special encouragement from Lord Halifax's visit in November 1937. Lord Halifax was then Lord President of the Council, ranking second in the Cabinet to the Prime Minister. According to the document recording the interview, he gave Hitler to understand that Britain would allow him a free hand in Eastern Europe. Halifax may not have meant as much, but that was the impression he conveyed – and it proved of crucial importance. Then, in February 1938, Mr. Eden was driven to resign as Foreign Minister after repeated disagreements with Chamberlain, and Halifax was appointed to succeed him at the Foreign Office. A few days later, the British Ambassador in Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson, called on Hitler for a confidential talk – in continuation of Halifax's November conversation – and conveyed to him that the British government was much in sympathy with his desire for 'changes in Europe' to Germany's benefit. As the documents show, these events precipitated Hitler's action."[914]

An Englishman:

> "At the Munich conference Chamberlain was fully aware that his Foreign Secretary, Halifax, and Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty and Member of Parliament, had encouraged the Poles in the summer of 1938 to adopt in Danzig a confrontational attitude toward Germany, in spite of the fact that Halifax had convinced the German leadership during his visit to Germany in 1937 that Great Britain considered the return of Danzig to the Reich as right and proper. The British Prime Minister knew perfectly that this deceitful policy, practiced by his own ministers, would very quickly lead Europe into another war, but he lacked the courage to discuss this situation with Hitler."[915]

During the period following the *Anschluss* of Austria, Hitler was again encouraged by Great Britain. This time he was "to make demands" on Czecho-Slovakia, which "took him by surprise."[916] The same course of events was repeated during the Sudeten crisis, which was not even of Hitler's making. From then on Hitler was portrayed by the Anglo-American world press as the "culprit," the "aggressor" and "imperialist," and a coalition of powers was subsequently formed against him.

It was in this fashion that the "Policy of the Balance of Power" was pursued; an approach against which Henderson was to caution his Foreign Minister on 18 July 1939 most urgently, albeit without success.[917]

Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister at the time, had originally wanted peace, even if it was only for the reason of gaining more time to facilitate a more extensive rearmament program. But the peace and friendship declaration on 30 September 1938 in Munich was his last independent foreign policy act. Any subsequent important decisions, whilst they all bear his signature, were taken against his will, prompted by the urgings of the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, by some highly-placed senior officials at the Foreign Office, by a considerable number of Members of Parliament from the Conservative Party but, above all, also from the

Labour Party, by the influential shapers of public opinion – and by U.S. President Roosevelt. After the Munich conference, there gained acceptance in Britain the demand "to restore the European equilibrium, unbalanced by Munich."[918] That the starting point of meddling in foreign affairs on the basis of a "complete about-turn to a readiness for war" was not solely to be found in London became evident after Chamberlain had made his outrageous claim that "America and the World Jewry had forced England into the war."[919]

Anybody who is familiar with this earlier history cannot fail but reach the conclusion that the British decision in the spring of 1939 to refuse the people of Danzig – to say nothing of West Prussia – the right to self-determination, and then do everything that was bound to aggravate German-Polish tensions, was neither based on ethical principles nor on a preference for the status quo. Great Britain tolerated, even supported unreservedly, the activities of Polish chauvinism in 1939, designed to change the status quo, the Great Power aspirations at the expense of Germany, but also the Soviet expansion at the expense of Poland and the Baltic States. Naturally, no legal maxims were required when it came to the "westwardly moving of the Polish frontier." One did not even try to keep up the pretence that all this was done for the sake of the dear Poles. Winston Churchill at the Yalta conference in February 1945:

> "As for the river Neisse ... in previous talks I had always qualified the moving of the Polish frontier westwards by saying that the Poles should be free to take territory in the west, but not more than they wished or could properly manage. It would be a great pity to stuff the Polish goose so full of German food that it died of indigestion."[920]

The words "I" and "always" and "German food" and "Polish goose" ought to be heavily emphasised.

We need to examine British secret diplomacy during the year 1939 in the light of this later admission. Although at that time Churchill was not in the British Cabinet, he was nevertheless one of those influential men, who were able to push Chamberlain into the direction they wanted. "The nearer we get to war, the more his chances improve."[921] Foreign Secretary Eden, in office again from 1940 onward, having already been active against Germany before the war when Foreign Secretary or when "a private individual," stated on 16 December 1944 in the House of Commons:

> "I have for many years held the opinion, as a private individual, that it would not be possible for the Polish State to maintain an independent national viability if the system of the Corridor is

retained…

As a correspondent in Geneva I had to sit in on this wretched Danzig affair. In truth, it was never going to work…

There was only one possibility to solve this problem, which was to give East Prussia to Poland and move the population from there to settle in another place..."[922]

Here, too, we need to underline some words: "for many years," and we shall likewise arrive back in pre-war times and find an astonishing accord with the ideas and actions of his powerful friends and of his successor and predecessor, Lord Halifax. In 1939 Anthony Eden had long ceased to be a private person, but was instead one of the most influential men in British society and politics, having been His Majesty's Foreign Secretary from December 1935 until February 1938.

Just how little these British statesmen were concerned about the fate of Poland is also evident from the many comments and especially from the actions before September 1939 and during the war. Winston Churchill in Yalta in 1945:

"As for myself, I do not take much interest in the Poles."[923]

This lack of interest in Poland could also be deduced not only from his attitude toward the Polish Government in Exile, but also from his efforts to suppress the truth about the massacre of over 10,000 Polish officers in the forest of Katyn.[924] Furthermore, Churchill did not mention Poland, his ally, in his "calculation of percentages" at the Moscow conference in October 1944, when he pushed across the table to Stalin a sheet of paper on which he had written his requested sphere of influence quota, expressed in percentages, for the Eastern European countries.[925]

President F.D. Roosevelt was acquainted with the perfidious Poland policy from London and was condoning it, as his remark to Foreign Secretary Eden (March 1943) reveals:

"The big powers would have to decide what Poland should have."[926]

So the Great Powers in question "did decide," while debarring all continental European States, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly already during the years before the war, on the foreign policy framework of their own allies and their Versailles fellow travellers, which included Poland. By using their propaganda and their economic capabilities, they would establish their value judgments according to their interests: the good,

peace-loving democracies and the bad, barbaric Germans. In this connection one has to agree with the Communist historians:

> "Poland had become irredeemably dependent on the imperialistic Western Powers, who imposed on the Polish government a policy that was not in the interest of the Polish people and which, in the end, destroyed the Polish State in 1939."[927]

Poland was chosen to serve the selfish aims of Great Britain according to the "Balance of the Powers." Misjudging London's true motives, Warsaw assumed this role with passionate zeal – and shattered.[928]

Britain's Policy on Germany from "Munich" to 15 March 1939

British politics after the Munich conference was determined to devalue the declaration of peace and friendship signed by Chamberlain and Hitler on 30 September 1938 and – to say the very least – to renew France's (and thus of Britain's) alliance agreements in Eastern Europe which had been created by the Versailles settlement, although they had become rather uncertain since then. The means used by London for this end were extremely questionable. The domestic and foreign policies, the mass media and the economy were now geared to a warlike development instead of being orientated toward peace and friendship. "The City is itching for war" – that is how a French historian in the year 1958 defined the situation at that time in London.[929] Churchill admitted that, from October 1938 onward, he had been determined "to come to blows with Hitler," and he was most definitely not only speaking for himself.[930]

> "The British pro-war group was drawn from every party in the land, with the strongest willingness for war being expressed by the members of the Liberal and the Labour Party…
>
> On the day that Chamberlain arrived back in London from Munich, the confirmed German-hater Alfred Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty, sent a message to Chamberlain in which he criticised Chamberlain's foreign policy and announced his resignation from the Cabinet."[931]

The parliamentary debates from 3 to 5 October 1938 on the Munich conference, in their lengthy and extensive polemics, highlighted the following developments:

a. The Cabinet that had decided in mid-September that the Sudetenland be returned to Germany no longer stood by its decision unequivocally.

b. These debates confirmed the press in their conviction that it was open season on Germany.
c. Chamberlain did not confront the agitators, who were unrestrained in their attacks on the Munich agreement and – as for example Churchill – would describe the Chancellor of the Reich as "highwayman" and "gangster" and the Munich agreement as "German extortion." But little by little he went along the same line, and he strengthened the position of his Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, who had also suddenly threatened with his resignation with reference to the Munich settlement, in a way so that gradually sole responsibility for British foreign policy was passed to Halifax.[932]
d. Chamberlain announced – under the pretext of the "German danger" – the hitherto biggest rearmament program.
e. The policy of the "inevitability of war" was launched energetically by means of every media outlet widely spreading fictitious alarming reports, by coalition arrangements with other powers, by encouraging an uncompromising stance toward Germany, by repeating inflammatory slogans (Germany = "aggressor nation") and by the deliberate withholding from the general public the German endeavours for peace.
f. The pressure on France to set the French defences in order became stronger, whereby "pressure" is to be understood to mean, at the very least, the unremitting zeal of the British government in suggesting to the French ally the need for a greatly increased rearmament.[933]
g. The preparation for a national auxiliary service and the public promotion of the preliminary groundwork, making ready for the introduction of universal conscription, was vastly speeded up.

"Chamberlain's policy was also attacked by leading Conservatives in Parliament, such as Eden and Churchill, with phrases which clearly revealed that they also would have preferred war to the Munich Declaration. But it was the leaders of the Labour Party that formed the most united pro-war group…

Chamberlain received a vote of confidence, albeit with a relatively small majority. The Liberal and Labour members all voted against Chamberlain, and at least half of the more prominent Conservatives pointedly refrained from voting for Chamberlain and his policy."[934]

Further steps along this readjusted British policy were the speech of Lord Halifax in Edinburgh on 23 October 1938, in which he emphasised that an

"armed peace in Europe could not be seen as a permanent peace on the basis of mutual understanding,"[935]

the incorporation of the Canadian industries into the British program for rearmament in the air from November 1938 onward, and the visit to Paris by Chamberlain and Halifax on 24 November 1938 to discuss armament and military measures. The statement by Halifax to his Ambassador in Paris of 1 November 1938 remained obviously without any effect:

"Henceforward we must count with German predominance in Central Europe. Incidentally I have always felt myself that, once Germany recovered her normal strength, this predominance was inevitable for obvious geographical and economic reasons…

It is one thing to allow German expansion in Central Europe, which to my mind is a normal and natural thing..."[936]

On 17 November 1938, Winston Churchill made a long speech recommending the setting up of a Ministry of Supply.[937]

On 30 November 1938, the Secretary of the Department of Overseas Trade, R.S. Hudson, was emphasising in the House of Commons, for no apparent reason, the threat of commercial competition from Germany and the supposed need for economic and political countermeasures.

"During these feverish weeks of November 1938 the leading circles in London brought about that change of direction in Britain which was to lead to war, deciding to wage war on an enemy who was threatening the lifeblood of British trade. The policy of uncompromising firmness, which, in the light of the international situation, could have no other solution than war, was determined then. It only awaited the opportunity to come out into the open; Poland was to provide the government in London with that opportunity."[938]

On 4 December 1938, the British Minister of Education stated that in Britain the opinion was growing that a conclusive agreement with Germany could no longer be reached. [935]

"The furor about the Munich agreement might have subsided in the following months, had not the Conservative leaders contrived by various means to keep the public in a state of alarm about Germany. … Earl De la Warr, Education Minister in the Chamberlain Cabinet, insisted in a speech at Bradford on December 4, 1938, that the feeling was prevalent in Great Britain that nothing could ever be done to satisfy Germany. This was a propaganda trick designed to create the very opinion which he claimed existed."[939]

On 7 December 1938, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, M. MacDonald, gave a brusque rebuff to Germany in his speech on the question of colonies, without this issue having even been raised by Berlin.

On 16 December 1938, the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, reported to his Minister for Foreign Affairs on the "phraseology with which public opinion is regularly fed here":

> "The situation after Munich is described here as one which is neither peace nor war. Prime Minister Chamberlain's statement that a new era has begun which will ensure 'peace in our time' is seen by all as an illusion which will quickly vanish when confronted with reality."[940]

On 11 January 1939, Chamberlain and Halifax with an advisory staff of six civil servants flew to Rome in order to intimidate Italy and to make known the discord between Germany and Poland, but also with the USSR ("Hitler apparently was planning to establish an independent Ukraine"), although London had at that time received no such indication from either Berlin or Warsaw. A clarification of German foreign policy, a disarmament conference, a common ground against Bolshevism, an effective peace initiative and a relaxing of positions – these German suggestions were not supported by these politicians.[941]

On 23 January 1939, Chamberlain gave a speech in the House of Commons with this result:

a. The introduction of Voluntary National Service which was intended to make Britain "ready for war."[942]
b. The public announcement of the British government that, in the event of vital interests of unnamed European countries being threatened, Britain would militarily intervene on the continent.

With that, the policy, which had intended military intervention only in the case of an attack on the British Isles, was given a public annulment. With this step and the previous one Chamberlain had made not only U.S. President Roosevelt's standpoint his own, which the President had announced on 4 January 1939 in an address to Congress as choosing "methods short of war,"[943] but also carried out these methods.

During the months of December 1938 and January 1939, Lord Halifax and other British public figures reinforced Roosevelt's stance with a number of false alarmist reports and a flood of corresponding articles in the press: Hitler was planning to establish an independent Ukraine ("this information came from Western Europe"[944]); he intended to destroy the Western Powers in a surprise attack, before turning to the East; he might seek to push Italy into war in the Mediterranean to find an excuse to fight; he was amassing German troops near the Czecho-Slovak border; Germany was facing an economic and financial crisis, which forced Hitler to use aggressive measures; "Hitler's mental condition, his insensate rage against Great Britain and his megalomania" are seen as a direct hazard.[945] London,

in the meantime, also felt encouraged by the of the secret German Opposition, whose contact-seeking endeavours had increased since autumn 1938 and who were nurturing hopes that a British show of strength or rather a "preventative war" would trigger a military putsch in the German Reich.

Another British initiative to be mentioned is the puzzling diplomatic game directed against Germany arising from the "fear that Poland might choose the German side" and thereby break the ring of encirclement. By discussing British "fears" about an agreement or even an alliance between Poland and Germany, the historians hereby admit themselves, albeit unintentionally, that Germany had not been threatening her Eastern neighbour but, on the contrary, was seeking co-operation with Poland. Lord Halifax admitted to his Ambassador in Paris on 1 November 1938:

> "… Poland ... can presumably only fall more and more into the German orbit."[946]

So the men privy to the European policy of that period – "alas, a not insignificant part of the then Western opinion"! – realised that the "fears" of London were that "a settlement of Danzig and the problem of the Corridor might still be achieved."[947] France, too, was firing a disruptive barrage in order to forestall any possibility of success of the visit by the Foreign Minister of the Reich, von Ribbentrop, to Warsaw (January 1939).[948]

> "He [Beck] took care not to tell the British that negotiations with Germany had reached deadlock. On the contrary, he implied that the question of Danzig would soon be settled. Once more, the British took alarm. They feared that Poland might draw closer to Germany, as had happened in 1938. The participation of Poland in 'a peace front' seemed to them vital. She alone could make the threat of a second front a reality.
>
> The British did not suppose that Poland herself was in imminent danger from Germany. On the contrary, they feared that she might choose the German side, particularly with Memel in the market. The Poles, too, felt in no danger."[949]

On 6 February 1939, Chamberlain stated in the House of Commons that Great Britain, in the event of "the vital interests" of France being threatened, would unconditionally back France militarily and that French Foreign Minister Bonnet had already given an identical assurance to London. This reciprocal promise referred specifically to the "eventuality of a war" and not to "an attack by Germany." Already in this alliance – as indeed later in the guarantee to Poland – "the question of the aggressor was ignored"! Great Britain entered this far-reaching and unconditional commitment despite the fact that France, because of her many alliance

obligations (for example toward Poland, the USSR, Czecho-Slovakia), was likely to be dragged into every conceivable European trouble spot.[950]

In mid-February 1939, Britain and France withdrew from some important obligations of the Geneva General Act pertaining to the neutrality laws and, in particular, to the maritime laws; they withdrew, thereby, with effect from 16 August 1939, from the arbitration procedures regarding neutrals countries. – This was decidedly a war-measure calculated for a European conflict!

> "On 21 February 1939, Chamberlain declared that there was at present no reason for a disarmament conference, as it would fail anyway, and he added that all parties in Britain now stood together behind the armament program. But he acknowledged the lately emerging leanings toward peace in Britain in that he conceded, a few days later, that there might possibly be a chance to negotiate about disarmament toward the end of the year. On 10 March Halifax expressed his disapproval of this last statement."[951]

After Neville Chamberlain had already attended a reception at the Soviet embassy on 1 March 1939, the Prime Minister again paid the Soviet Ambassador a visit on 9 March 1939[952] – for a Prime Minister a most unusual attitude! – and with that was expressing, according to Churchill's statement,

> "…the new interest which Great Britain is taking in the possibilities of increased trade and co-operation with Russia."[953]

In the *Documents on British Foreign Policy* there is the evidence that, besides Chamberlain, the Secretary of the Overseas Trade Department, Mr. Hudson, had also on the same 9 March tried to press a British credit on the Soviet Union in a way that Maisky had become very concerned and worried about this and could only explain this move from some hidden, political motives.[954] Britain's effort to enlist the Soviet Union against Germany is thereby already established at a time when there was not even a pretext available. The occupation of Bohemia and Moravia occurred six days later!

Chamberlain wrote in October 1939, looking back over his time in office, he did not believe

> "that it was possible for me to do more than I did to prepare the country for war after Munich."[955]

Even if this later vindicatory remark from Chamberlain might have been perhaps exaggerated, it really bears witness to the pressure that was exerted on the Prime Minister from his own ranks during those months.

All these measures reflect the British drive, after the Declaration of Peace and Friendship with Germany, at a time when Hitler was indisputably abiding by this declaration. The British government could not rightfully seek to justify itself by claiming that this course had become necessary within the context of European peace and of European security, as it signified really an obvious violation of the principles of peaceable conduct as agreed on with Germany. It had to be obvious to any reasonable person that the fires of war were being fanned with these British actions. Winston Churchill declared on 10 March 1939 to Bernard Baruch, Roosevelt's chief advisor, who was not without knowledge of the internal situation within the British leadership:

> "War is coming very soon. We will be in it and you [the United States] will be in it."[956]

The British government was aware that Germany was not looking for a fight with Britain, and that she was also making efforts toward peace and friendship with regard to other countries. Hitler's sole reaction within the context of the British drive for action was Germany's occupation of Czechia on 15 March 1939 which, however – as described separately – was due to a whole range of other causes.

Hitler's speech on 9 October 1938 in Saarbrücken, which was "interpreted" as a "provocation" by the Western Powers, merely highlighted the dangers that were bound to result from the British attitude and warned against continuing with that policy. In no way, however, did it represent a turning away from the Munich signature.

The British Reaction to 15 March 1939

The British government, together with the French government, was demanding in a note to Hitler an explanation of his actions in Prague. The British Prime Minister had not intended using the Proclamation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia as an opportunity for a belligerent reply.[957] However, as was becoming the usual practice by then, he again submitted to the pressures exerted on him.

> "He [Chamberlain] did not think it necessary to recommend any practical action to Parliament…
>
> Chamberlain's attitude [on 15 March 1939 in the House of Commons] aroused a violent reaction, not only on the part of the Labour and Liberal Opposition Party but even from certain elements in the Conservative Party. In particular, Eden sharply criticised the foreign policy of the

Government and gave the warning that the annexation of Czecho-Slovakia would be followed by new acts of aggression on the part of the Fascist dictators. Eden vigorously demanded the setting up of an all-party Coalition Government with the task of effective resistance to aggression, which would for this purpose enter upon close co-operation with other peaceable States."[958]

Lord Halifax revealed to the German Ambassador in London, von Dirksen, on 15 March 1939:

"I could well understand Herr Hitler's taste for bloodless victories, but one of these days he would find himself up against something that would not be bloodless."[959]

The tactics, employed for imposing their will by those groups working toward war, went well beyond establishing their own position in the event of a conflict.

"Lord Halifax's peculiar silence in the weeks prior to the German occupation of Prague, when he was fully aware of the approaching crisis, and especially his failure actually to answer Ribbentrop's letter of 28 February, gave the Germans the impression that the occupation of Czecho-Slovakia would not have any notable or unfavourable repercussions on Anglo-German relations.

Further developments clearly show that Halifax was determined to mislead Germany into presuming that not only would he not put up any opposition to the imminent action in Czecho-Slovakia, but that he would really even favour it. The whole attitude from Chamberlain and Halifax with regards to the Czech question from November 1938 up to 15 March 1939 makes it obvious, therefore, why they did not dare to turn the German action into an official reason for their protest and their efforts of inciting the British public opinion. But with Vansittart's help they presented a dishonest excuse for their political about-face, which could then be registered into the official protocol."[960]

So it happened that, at a well-chosen moment in time, on 17 March 1939, the Rumanian Ambassador in London, Virgil Tilea, "following a telephone call from Paris"[961] which had apparently been arranged by the Foreign Office,[962] sent a false report to the British Foreign Secretary stating that Germany had presented an ultimatum to Rumania, or rather, the German government were to have demanded from Rumania a monopoly of Rumanian exports, as well as force Rumania to adopt measures of restriction of her industrial production in the interest of Germany while, concurrently, the Rumanian frontiers would be guaranteed by the German armed forces. The news of a German trade delegation staying in Rumania, coincidentally in the middle of March 1939, served as the peg on which to hang the story. The supposition that Mr. Tilea's lie was put about by the Foreign Office by way of a fabricated "telephone call from Paris" could be reinforced, meanwhile, to the point of becoming conclusive proof.[963]

In British leading circles one was willing, at that time, to follow a path which is paraphrased as "stop Hitler," by refusing compromise and by

means of "methods short of war."[964] These plans were geared to action and initiative, and one did not even take the trouble to claim, be it only for propaganda reasons, that Great Britain's security was being menaced by Hitler. Merely a voluntary decision of the Rumanian government to develop their trade with Germany was interpreted by influential British circles as another "disturbance of the European balance," and from that was derived the "necessity" of intervention against Germany. In the words of the Prime Minister:

> "If Germany obtained control of Rumania's resources in oil and wheat, etc., whether this was achieved directly or indirectly, this would mean a great accession of strength to Germany, and a weakening of the other side."[965]

Already at that time, Chamberlain liked to refer to German economic activity, to peaceful German work and performance, as "economic penetration," "which would have all the results of a conquest." He linked this to the question how to stop Germany "save by an ultimatum or, in other words, by a preventive and precarious war."[966] Although the British Prime Minister did not want to make himself responsible for such a war, he could count on enough fanatics in the Foreign Office who would seize on his remarks high-handedly and who were only too willing to put them into action. Was not "the case of Rumania" as mentioned by Chamberlain, which was seen as difficult "to distinguish between ... flagrant acts of war and ... economic penetration" with "all the results of conquests," nothing short of a call to action for his Foreign Office colleagues?

The Tilea lie, as regards timing and content, was too well incorporated into London's already up-and-running politics of rumour-spreading to suspect the source to be any other than the Foreign Office. This was at the time when the British government had not as yet elected Poland as the country that, so one imagined, could be roused against Germany – not even by alarming world opinion. As was well known, "they feared that Poland might draw closer to Germany"[967] and assumed, therefore, they would not meet the desired response in Poland. Taking advantage of its worldwide communication network and the anti-German orientated objectives of other countries, the Foreign Office was influencing world opinion by suggesting that, as well as Rumania, there was the Ukraine, the Western Powers and the Mediterranean region, which were in direct danger of an imminent German attack.[968] Poland hastened expeditiously to abet this London

induced psychosis with her own alarming news reports.[969] The Soviets, for their part, were using this agitation for their own ends as well.

This Rumanian shock report was conforming too neatly to the British mentality and to the intellectual understanding of world opinion. In addition, it was too accurately aligned with the goal of the agitation and which, selected for propaganda purposes, had already been blown-up out of all proportion by Churchill in the House of Commons debate after the Munich conference: "Opening the route to the Black Sea":

a. Since Germany had no common frontier with Rumania, but was separated from the nearest Rumanian tip of land by 350 kilometres of Hungarian territory, a German hostile intention toward Hungary was also psychologically worked into this report.
b. In this way the causes for the disintegration of Czecho-Slovakia could be misrepresented, and the media could go to town on this falsification by claiming that Hitler's march on Prague was to be seen as the next step in his planning of other acts of aggression against the peoples of the world, as Mr. Eden had already predicted in the House of Commons debate on 15 March 1939.[970]
c. British touchiness about the successful commercial policy that Germany pursued with the Balkan countries was especially pronounced in the case of Rumania, since Rumania could become Germany's most important supplier of oil, and because Great Britain had considerable vested interests there in the oil industry and other sectors of the economy.

The specific proof that Lord Halifax had personally concocted the "Tilea lie" is revealed by the chain of clues of his actions on 17 March:

a) Already on 16 March, Halifax had indicated to the Soviet Ambassador, through Sir Robert Vansittart, the change of policy on Great Britain's part that would be related in the speech by Chamberlain on 17 March.[971]
b) Several British historians confirmed that Halifax had persuaded his Prime Minister into taking this action of making a stand against Germany. [971]
c) "On the morning" [of 17 March] Halifax already knew that "Chamberlain would deliver a speech which would be a 'rather stiff one,'" because he said as much to the American Chargé d'Affaires,

Johnson. Certainly he did not tell him everything, but enough to have Johnson sent a telegram to Washington:

> "They are suspicious that Hitler will keep on moving and that rather quickly."[972]

d) "In the afternoon" Tilea asked to "urgently see" the British Foreign Secretary. Only then did Halifax "hear" officially of the "German ultimatum." During this conversation he told Tilea that in the evening Chamberlain was making a speech into which, essentially, the consequences of this latest information had already been incorporated. Apparently, Tilea did not seem surprised about these facts.[973]

e) Halifax had it taken down in the minutes of this afternoon conversation with Tilea that the Rumanian Minister had "left a telegram" with him, in which he was instructed to take this step of informing the British Foreign Secretary. [973] This telegram, however, cannot be found in anywhere, and nobody has referred to the telegram as a source. Evidently Tilea was also left in the dark about a "telegram" that had been recorded in the minutes, since he actually only spoke of a "telephone call from Paris."

What is noticeable is that the "news of the ultimatum" was restricted exclusively to London, whilst in all the other capitals all was quiet regarding this affair. For example, the British Ambassador in Bucharest, Sir Samuel Hoare, sent a telegram to London on 18 March:

> "2. It appeared to me so utterly improbable that the Minister for Foreign Affairs [of Rumania] would not have informed me that an immediate threatening situation had developed here that I called on him as soon as your telegrams to Warsaw and Moscow had been deciphered. He told me that he was being inundated with enquiries regarding the reports of a German ultimatum which had appeared in 'The Times' and 'Daily Telegraph' today. There was not a word of truth in it."[974]

At the same time Lord Halifax was developing an excessive zeal trying to find out what the intended reaction was going to be from Warsaw, Belgrade, Ankara, Athens, Paris, Moscow and Washington in the case of German hostilities against Rumania.[975]

Even after indisputable refutation of the Tilea swindle and in spite of the protests received from Bucharest, the British leadership refused to deny this lie. Instead, the British government used this to justify actions which would have serious consequences:

Chamberlain gave his expected speech in Birmingham, basing it on the "latest information" from Lord Halifax.

Hitler was regarded from now on, as intended by the British policy, no longer merely as "aggressor" but as a man who was planning "to dominate the world by force."[976]

The British government – and, in its shadow, the French government – "were bringing unusual pressure to bear on Rumania" in order to prevent the conclusion of an economic treaty with Germany.[977]

> "He [Gafencu] complained of the enormous pressure which up to the last moment had been exerted on the Government from abroad, in order to prevent the conclusion of the Wohlthat Treaty. For example, the British Minister had called on him concerning an alleged German economic ultimatum, which he had denied. The Minister again called because his denial was not believed in London…
>
> Gafencu also complained of the incredible rumours which had been circulated in order to overthrow him…"[978]

Based on the Tilea lie, Halifax intensified on the same day of 17 March the drive to include the Soviet Union in the coalition against Germany. He put forward the suggestion that the USSR should be prepared to offer assistance to Rumania against German aggression and to effect a suitable agreement. The links for diplomatic and military talks with the USSR, which had already been formed after Chamberlain's visits to the Soviet embassy in London on 1 and 9 March 1939,[979] would thus be consolidated.

Although Chamberlain would have come to know, at the very latest, on 18 March that there never had been a German ultimatum aimed at Rumania, he still took the initiative for "something" to "be done at once as a demonstration against further German advance,"[980] with the explicit request that the USSR, France and Poland join together in a system "of collective security."

Soviet historians might be right when they write:

> "Over the course of a month from 18 March to 17 April, no talks about an alliance [between Britain, the USSR and France] were taking place, but instead there were made attempts by the British government to push the USSR to take diplomatic actions against Germany of the kind that were bound to have resulted in a worsening of German-Soviet relations and which should have caused Germany to abandon the realisation of her immediate aims regarding Rumania and Poland. They were intent on provoking Germany to attack the USSR."[981]

They quote, amongst other things, a Foreign Office memorandum of 22 May 1939 as proof, in which is stated

> "…that it was essential, if there must be a war, to try to involve the Soviet Union in it, otherwise at the end of the war the Soviet Union, with her army intact and England and Germany in ruins, would dominate Europe."[982]

On 20 March 1939 Chamberlain wrote to Mussolini:

> "I have heard many rumours that Herr Hitler is planning some new coup…
> Does this mean that the events in Czecho-Slovakia are only the prelude to further attempts at control of other States? If it does, I foresee that sooner or later, and probably sooner, another major war is inevitable."[983]

Chamberlain let it be known that to him Germany appeared determined to impose her will upon "all other" nations. Yet Mr. Chamberlain did not regard it necessary to rap the media hotheads and rumour-mongers within his ranks on the knuckles and to distance himself from these rumours and catchphrases.

The talks with the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, taking place in London from 4 to 6 April 1939, clearly showed how intensely the British leadership was, time and again, playing the cards "Hungary," "Rumania" and "Yugoslavia" against a reluctant Poland that did not consider herself – as indeed the Balkan countries thought likewise – in any danger, in order to get this country on her side by inducing a fear psychosis.[984] These attempts, which were the outcome of the many deliberations in the diplomatic exchanges since the beginning of March 1939 between London and Paris, also plainly reveal the purposeful action of the Tilea lie by the Foreign Office. Any politician that had no connection whatsoever with the Tilea hoax would hardly have tried, after the many official denials a fortnight earlier, to shock the Polish government, which refused to be impressed by the fictitious German economic ultimatum to Rumania, with the "threat of a German attack from the air on Rumania." Beck rebuffed this remonstrating from Halifax as "purely theoretical."

Principally Britain, but other countries too, would later refer to the establishment of the Protectorate over Bohemia and Moravia as one of the decisive reasons for war. This is but a pretext, because the intentions of the British government had already been settled before "Prague" – the various drives by the British government after the Munich conference and the staging of the Tilea swindle put the matter beyond doubt.

Carte Blanche to Poland on 31 March 1939

Mid-March 1939 onward, the British government had begun to clearly outline their policy of intervention on the European continent and to increase, without any regard to the legal position, the likelihood of an outbreak of war, if not making war altogether unavoidable. Lord Halifax put Poland into a state of alarm, and he suggested changing the Polish-Rumanian Alliance, which was directed against the Soviet Union, into an anti-German pact. Actually, neither Poland nor Rumania was prepared for such a change,[985] yet, all the same, Warsaw was again being instructed herewith that Britain was resolved to do battle against Germany, and that Poland could be certain of the unconditional assistance from London. Identical assurance had already come in from the United States.[986]

The British and French "fears," which had surfaced on the occasion of Ribbentrop's amicable meeting in Warsaw at the end of January 1939, but previously in evidence in November 1938 with regard to a possible German-Polish arrangement over Danzig,[987] were finally checked with the perception that had already been indicated on 15 November 1938 by Kennard:

> "Such a policy (that Poland would have eventually come in on the German side [wrote Kennard]), would have been so unpopular in Poland that I do not think it could have been carried out so long as there were a good chance of the Western Powers' defeating Germany. I believe that Poland would have remained neutral as long as possible but that, when it became clear that Germany was losing, public opinion would have forced the Government to join the Western Powers unless some previous action of Soviet Russia had compelled Poland to commit herself to repelling the advance of Bolshevik troops through Polish territory."[988]

At a time, when the French Foreign Minister "had gained the impression"

> "that, in the view of the Polish government, there was no imminent danger of an attack by Germany upon Rumania, by Hungary upon Rumania or by Germany upon Hungary,"[989]

Chamberlain, Lord Halifax and Bonnet tried on 22 March 1939 "to secure her [Poland's] participation in the organisation which we were trying to build up for the defence of Rumania." [989] Chamberlain stated at this London conference:

> "The object in view was to prevent the expansion of Germanism. In order to do this, Germany must be made to feel that she would meet with resistance in the east. If Poland and Rumania gave the impression that they were not favourable to any scheme for the organisation of defence against Germany, it would be impossible to produce such an impression on Germany." [989]

The Soviet Union was to be integrated into this system afterwards. Both Chamberlain and Bonnet agreed that neither Rumania nor Poland felt themselves threatened, that these two countries did not see any indications of an "expanding Germanism," and that both countries (apart from the tiresome minority question in Poland) were living in perfectly peaceable relations with Germany. But at the same time Chamberlain and Bonnet were also in full agreement that one only needed to make these countries aware of this "threat" with enough persistence, over and over, to have them eventually do what Paris and, principally, London wanted. As neither the Tilea lie nor the many rumours had made any impression up to now, when even the establishment of the Protectorate over Bohemia-Moravia by Hitler failed to produce the slightest change in the Polish and Rumanian policies, London now felt obliged to state things somewhat more plainly.

> "M. Bonnet agreed with this conclusion, and thought that something might be done on these lines. He had gained the impression that the Poles did not like vague obligations, but, if something precise could be put before them, they would probably accept." [989]

On the same day that this discussion in London was taking place, with Chamberlain and Bonnet agreeing to "try this new tactic," the British Ambassador in Warsaw, Kennard, sent a telegram to the Foreign Secretary:

> "Mr. Beck would clearly not achieve one of our objects, namely to give public warning to Herr Hitler.
>
> 2. But publication with Poland's consent might be possible after Poland had been assured in secret discussion that effective and immediate steps to resist German aggression were contemplated by Western Powers.
>
> 3. Difficulty about Danzig is that it is not in itself a good casus belli and while Mr. Beck would be glad to know (though he could not admit it) that he was not without backing in the event of negotiations with Germany taking a nasty turn, yet he is naturally thinking more of what he can get than what he can give in the way of collective security; the occupation of Memel has brought him a step nearer to our ideas and his offer of secret discussions should not, I feel, be rejected out of hand but used to complete his conversion."[990]

Still on that same 22 March information arrived in London, parallel to the Kennard dispatch, that Beck felt himself obliged "to lean more toward Germany" and would not "greatly care for a British declaration of aid" against the Reich.[991] Yet even this did not induce the British government to abandon their plan.

In the meantime, the U.S. Ambassador extraordinary in Paris was particularly busy. On 23 March 1939, Bullitt urged President Roosevelt "that 'some nations in Europe' should stand up to Germany quickly."[992] Next, he got in touch with the Polish Ambassador in Paris, who defined the

game, which the Western Powers were planning to have with the European nations, in these words:

> "The ostensible endeavour to co-operate with Russia in a form and within a sphere which merely covers the needs of Chamberlain's internal policy gives rise to the suspicion that here it is not only a question of defending those nations threatened by the new methods of German policy, but also of an ideological fight against Hitlerism, and that the final aim of these actions is not peace, but the instigation of a revolution in Germany…
>
> It is a distressing and even tragic fact that, regarding the present situation, it is not a question of the interests of a single country being at stake but – without exaggeration – of the avoidance of a catastrophic armed conflict. I instance here the case of Poland. I am not acquainted with the text of the British proposal, nor with Herr Hitler's intentions, but on careful examination of some unmistakable aspects, I have formed my own opinion with regard to the actual situation. The British initiative, which is imprudent, frivolous in its form and defective in its contents, confronts the Polish Government with the alternative of either compromising their relations with Germany or seeing their negotiations with London fail. In the former case, Hitler may feel obliged to use force against us, to which we could reply in no other way than by armed resistance. This would lead to a general European conflict…
>
> In the second case, the failure of negotiations with London would be proof for Hitler of the dishonesty and weakness of British and French policy, which in turn would encourage him to further expansionist undertakings in Eastern and Central Europe, leading sooner or later to the disaster of war. In these circumstances it is not only childish but criminal to attempt to make Poland responsible for war or peace. It must be placed on record once and for all that the responsibility rests principally with France and England, whose senseless or ridiculously weak policy has led up to the situation and the events now occurring."[993]

The question asked by Bullitt, "whether we would accept a joint alliance, if one were offered us by Britain and France to-morrow," was avoided by Lukasiewicz with the remark that this would depend on British military preparedness. Up to now, the British measures had not convinced Poland that England was fully committed to break off her relations with Germany. Until now it was to be just the others – for example, Poland – that were to compromise their relations with Germany. Bullitt "made my views his own," had these views conveyed to Chamberlain and followed this up (on 26 March) with the statement that the United States had the means,

> "of exercising real pressure upon Great Britain, and he would lend his very serious consideration to their mobilisation." [993]

During that period, to be exact on 24 March 1939, the British government was informed by the Prince Regent of Yugoslavia, Prince Paul,

> "that the Polish Government will in no circumstances commit themselves in advance to fight against Germany in hypothetical circumstances."[994]

Not only did the Polish, British and French governments have no grounds whatsoever for claiming that Germany was threatening Poland, but the secret dispatches of British military experts suggested, on the contrary,

"that purely from the military aspect the present moment was the best to go to war."[995]

In these actual words, the British Air Attaché, J.L. Vachell, informed the Foreign Office via the British embassy in Berlin on 6 April 1939:

> "As you know I returned last evening from a brief visit to Poland, during which I had an opportunity to discuss the situation with a number of different people in Warsaw, and on my way back paid a visit to Danzig, where, owing to the kindness of Mr Sheppard [recte: Shepherd], our Consul-General, I was able to get an insight into the local situation. During my stay in Warsaw the Ambassador showed me a dispatch which he had received from Berlin which expressed the opinion that, from the army point of view, the present was a most favourable opportunity for a preventive war to be undertaken against further German ambitions, and that it would even be to our advantage to provoke such a war." [995]

British documents revealed conclusively that strategic points of views such as these were not just a consequence, but rather the basis of the British guarantee to Poland. Worldwide opportunities were at the disposal of the British government to impose their will of the "Balance of Power Politics."

> "At the end of March [1939] a wild rumour that Germany was about to invade Poland was spread by the Berlin correspondent of the *News Chronicle*. The rumour served the [British] Government's purpose. They did not believe it, but the public demanded action. The Government would therefore publicise their offer to Beck. In this way domestic opinion would be satisfied and Beck, having received an open pledge, would feel bound to reciprocate by giving his own pledge to Roumania…
>
> The British therefore began to plan for pressure to be brought on Beck for the Roumanian guarantee."[996]

Admittedly, the British government was not exactly quite this weak-willed under the sway of their press or, rather, the "public opinion in the country," since, after all, it was the government which was largely directing "public opinion in the country." In fact, long before the "will of public opinion" was attracting attention, there had already been discussions by the leading groups in London and Paris about the plans to get Poland to "compromise" her relations with Germany or, rather, about the vital factors to be brought in later and given as the reason for the guarantee. Also, the guarantee to Poland was not at all a "spontaneous act," triggered by a newspaper report, but had been carefully coordinated with the secret reports to hand. That the British government could not care less about the will of the people, that is, did not see itself in the role of executor of "public opinion," is also shown in the way that both their recent measures and their guarantee to Poland, deciding over war and peace in Europe, had been pushed through by a handful of men without any debates in Parliament, yes, even without consultations in Cabinet.[997]

On 31 March 1939 Neville Chamberlain did thus hand over unconditionally, without having been beseeched or pushed and without any need, the decision making for the deployment of the might of the British Empire, with all the consequences, to the Polish government, indeed, even to subordinate Polish representatives. This fullness of power was conferred in a manner that "ignored the question of the aggressor."[998] Chamberlain gave this *carte blanche* to a country, which

a. had clearly demonstrated their own lust for war by their partial mobilisation of only a few days previously and by the lack of restraint shown by their populace toward the German Reich and the German minority groups;[999]
b. by no means could be ranked among the close allies of Britain, but was formerly and still in the year of 1938 regarded by the British government with much scepticism and had been judged as unreliable (Sudeten crisis);[1000]
c. had since 1918 continually and absolutely, in the minorities question as in her foreign policy attitude, disregarded the principles of the League of Nations, and which had, during the years of 1938/1939 as well, never given any indication to the world at large of a new direction for reconciliation with her minority groups and her neighbours;
d. had, ever since 1919, been proclaiming her expansionist aims and had been striving for them, not at least by its 1921 war of conquest against Soviet Russia;
e. had a dictatorial government;
f. could not be at all protected by Britain;
g. was not threatened by Germany.

"This binding by Britain to every Polish action, of whatever nature, represents a unique event in the annals of diplomacy."[1001]

The British government extended the blank check in a unilateral commitment against Germany, while ignoring the dangers for Poland looming from the USSR, which were known to every Western politician, as the many diplomatic communications of the pre-war period verify. The awareness of these dangers was fundamental knowledge for every European politician. However, the British guarantee was not in respect to the Polish-German national frontier, but was taken up rather for the permanent fixing

of the territories in West Prussia and Eastern Upper Silesia that had been stolen by Poland in 1918 from Germany, as well as for retaining the unacceptable, special status of Danzig. That no rights were guaranteed here, and that subsequently it was a working against peace, is plainly evident.

This "spontaneous act" even surprised the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski:

> "It is not certain who was responsible, but probably it was Halifax. In particular, I do not know how the British government learnt that the situation was ripe for such a guarantee. At all events it was not we who told them."[1002]

The British guarantee statement was not even made known beforehand to the Polish Ambassador, despite the fact that on 30 March 1939 he had been in extensive talks with Lord Halifax.[1003] Possibly this is to be attributed to the fact that Raczynski was refusing to acknowledge that Poland was threatened by Germany, since Raczynski had affirmed again during these talks that such a danger was non-existent. But this was not exactly news for Lord Halifax; he had sufficient proof to hand of Hitler's desire for an understanding with Poland.[1004] The French government, as well, did not, "apprehend any imminent coup against Poland."[1005]

On the day of the guarantee announcement, Chamberlain emphasised what Lord Halifax on 3 April, shortly before the arrival in London of the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Beck, was reiterating in the House of Lords:

> "His Majesty's Government have no official confirmation of the rumours of any projected attack and they must not, therefore, be taken as accepting them as true."[1006]

These plain facts did not, however, prevent Lord Halifax from informing, with deceitful intent, the world at large – as in the following case telling the Rumanian government –

> "…that we [the British government] have been led to take this interim action regarding Poland alone in view of the information in our possession, which seems to indicate the possibility of immediate action against that country."[1007]

The motives that were underlying the guarantee when conferred by the British government can both be derived from the verifiable fact that London was not worried about any German aggressive intentions and also from the fact that Halifax, despite the available reassuring news, informed the world of "German aggressive intentions." After all, the motives can also be

deduced from the text of the guarantee itself. Prime Minister Chamberlain said in the already mentioned speech of 31 March 1939:

> "Any change in the legal facts of the case between Poland and Germany, or rather Danzig, will unleash a war from Britain against Germany, if, according to the views of the Poles, a restriction of their rights should be present."[1008]

Great Britain "spontaneously" placed herself under the obligation to give military assistance for war, should Poland describe an action as a "threat to her independence," requiring a military "response." Not facts, therefore, were the decisive factor for determining the likelihood of war, but rather random "grounds" that Poland might choose as pretext for a resolve for war. These included – as was to be demonstrated – also German negotiation proposals, even German offers of a compromise, as these were always rejected by the Polish side as being a "veil to cover our capitulation."[1009]

In this connection it is to be emphasised that Ambassador Kennard, to whom a draft of the British guarantee had been forwarded for his observations, had expressly asked the British Foreign Secretary, with reference to the Polish war psychosis at that time, that the word "unprovoked" (in the event that "unprovoked" action were taken) be inserted into the intended guarantee.[1010] Equally expressly, Lord Halifax refused this, as

> "the German technique of aggression is so varied and so insidious that it might well be that Poland might in certain circumstances be driven in self-defence to commit a technical act of provocation."[1011]

Chamberlain had given this guarantee to Poland also "in the name of France," without, however, having received beforehand authority from the French government. The French had shown little willingness "to die for Danzig"; nevertheless, with this decision from London, as well as later with the ultimatum and with the declaration of war by Britain on 3 September 1939, the French were manoeuvred into a position which left hardly any avenue open to them for opposing Great Britain's policy of war. Thus, for better or worse, Paris had to agree belatedly to the British guarantee to Poland "also in the name of France."

If the British government, on learning about German aggressive intentions toward Poland and out of concern for peace being threatened by Germany, had given the guarantee to assist Poland in the event of an unprovoked attack by Hitler, then this guarantee would have been legitimate

and not even detrimental to peace in Europe. Had she given a guarantee under these circumstances, Britain would have once again appointed herself – entirely on her own authority – as "adjudicator" over European nations with *equal* rights and as guardian of the value systems of this world – naturally favouring her national interest. This policy might still have been construed as "British," if Britain could have discerned a provoked war from a war of aggression and had been striving impartially for a fair settlement.

For the first time in British history, though, London transferred to a foreign power unconditionally the decision-making on the issue of war or peace and approved in advance any of the measures intended by Poland. The era was over when a French Prime Minister (Poincaré 1923) could still say:

> "The British government had no intention of getting drawn into a war which could result from a Central or East European conflict, fearing that such a conflict could well be caused by the imprudent actions of powers whom it does not wish to encourage in a policy of adventure by giving in advance a pledge of assistance."[1012]

Winston Churchill was the one who called the British guarantee to Poland in March 1939 a "milestone to disaster," yet who, nevertheless, approved of this decision, was indeed "glad" about it, as he expressed himself at the Teheran conference in 1943[1013] – without giving a thought to the foaming Polish chauvinism in the spring and summer of 1939. This is in particular what the British wartime Premier wrote about the guarantee to Poland:

> "History… may be scoured and ransacked to find a parallel to this sudden and complete reversal of five or six year's policy of easy-going placatory appeasement, and its transformation almost overnight into a readiness to accept an obviously imminent war on far worse conditions and on the greatest scale. Our guarantee to Poland [was a]… milestones to disaster...
>
> Here was a decision at last, taken at the worst possible moment and on the least satisfactory ground, which must surely lead to the slaughter of tens of millions of people."[1014]

Winston Churchill admits further that not only he himself, but also "every politician who understood the situation," had been or should have been aware, at the time when the agreement was concluded, of the warlike explosive force of the guarantee to Poland:

> "But no one who understood the situation could doubt that it [giving the British guarantee to Poland] meant in all human probability a major war in which we should be involved…"[1014]

This same Winston Churchill declared on 3 April 1939 in the House of Commons:

> "Having begun this new policy there can be no turning back…

To stop here with a guarantee to Poland would be to halt in No-man's Land under fire of both trench lines and without the shelter of either…

We must go forward now until a conclusion is reached. Having begun to create a Grand Alliance against aggression, we cannot afford to fail. We shall be in mortal danger if we fail...

It has become a matter of life or death."[1015]

From this time on, Winston Churchill applied himself vigorously along these lines, that is to say, along the lines of a hardening of positions and of finalising an unconditional pact of alliance with the Soviet Union.

The State Secretary and member of the resistance in the German Foreign Office Ernst von Weizsäcker wrote:

"In a normal pact of alliance the partners agree to mutual military assistance in the event of an unprovoked attack by a third party. Whether such a case exists is naturally determined by the partner who is asked to help. But here it was the opposite. Warsaw had it in their hands to drag the British Empire into war."[1016]

If it was not the purpose of the guarantee to bring about a war, then most definitely the aim was to prevent a renewed peaceable revision of the regulations of the Versailles dictate.[1017]

Duff Cooper, the British Minister for Economic Warfare:

"Never before in history have we ever given the decision, on whether Great Britain was to interfere in a war or not, to another power.

Now the decision rests with a handful of men, whose names – possibly with the exception of Colonel Beck – are completely unknown to our nation [as were their deeds which they were to commit in the year 1939 – author's note]. Therefore these strangers can by tomorrow demand the outbreak of a European war."[1018]

A Frenchman, Professor Henri Lebre, gave his opinion in 1958:

"History teaches that Poland and her leading personalities, whose megalomania was well known and whose courage or rather foolish boldness left no room for common sense, would be the last people that could be entrusted with such a responsibility, unless one wanted to hurtle toward a catastrophe."[1019]

Liddell-Hart, the prominent British military author and historian, admitted that the guarantee to Poland, the way it had been given, "did have a war-provoking effect," which was further intensified by the introduction of compulsory military service in Britain.[1020]

Russell Grenfell, another British military historian, understood:

"A guarantee is itself a challenge. It publicly dares a rival to ignore the guarantee and take the consequences; after which it is hardly possible for that rival to endeavour to seek a peaceful solution of its dispute with the guaranteed country without appearing to be submitting to blackmail."[1021]

The German historian Michael Freund realised:

"The British pact of mutual assistance with Poland was the turning point of the European question. Britain had cast the die. 'The British are now prepared,' as French Prime Minister

Daladier said, 'to see their frontier at the Vistula and no longer on the Rhine'…"[1022]

The British blank check – apart from the fact that it rubber-stamped the mistreatment of the German minority in Poland – also violated the wishes of the people of the German city of Danzig which, as is well known, was not under Polish sovereignty. Every attempt from the population of Danzig to free themselves from the bonds that were put on it by Versailles and that were, in the years following, constantly pulled tighter by Poland (economic pressure, expanding the Polish sphere of authority) was now seen as the trigger for Britain's decision for war.

Every independent country is allowed to conclude alliances with whomever it wishes and for whatever issue; it is allowed to join any military, economic and political union it may consider necessary. But when, on the other hand, a "free" German city wants to reunite with Germany, not wishing any longer to be economically ruined by a foreign power and to let herself be conquered step by step, this then is seen as resulting in a British declaration of war against Germany!

The British letter of license had the effect that was to be expected by all participants: Not only did the Polish government not impose any restrictions on their country in line with their situation, but on the contrary, as on past occasions they lost sight of the extent of their possibilities.[1023]

A few days after the announcement of the guarantee, the Polish Foreign Minister travelled to London. After the talks held there from 4 to 6 April 1939, even Colonel Beck "was much surprised" about the way he was "worked on" and was made into the hero of the resistance against Germany.[1024] Beck disappointed the hopes of the British "with his usual great-power arrogance, … he was not likely to be moved by gentle promptings from Chamberlain and Halifax."[1025] The British hopes, which Beck disappointed, and the promptings, which he resisted, were – just like the unfounded rumours of German troop movements toward the Polish frontier,[1026] which had been circulated throughout the world on schedule, and similar to the "rumours of German movements" from "21 May 1938" – solely aimed at one thing: to leave Poland holding the baby. Beck had well noted these Foreign Office endeavours; he regarded the negotiations, according to the view of Joseph Potocki, Head of the Western Department at the Polish Foreign Ministry, as a means of intimidating the Germans "and was not interested in the precise terms of [the] agreement."[1027] To put it

more aptly: He was not interested in the preconditions from London, which were considerably more extensive.

> "He [Beck] 'had not noticed any signs of dangerous military action on the part of Germany'; 'no negotiations were proceeding' over Danzig; 'the German Government had never contested Polish rights in Danzig, and had recently confirmed them'; 'if he were to go by what the Germans themselves said, he would say that the gravest question was the colonial question.'"[1028]

Neville Chamberlain acknowledged on 3 April 1939 in the House of Commons that he was trying to encircle Germany, albeit with defensive intentions. Just how "defensive" this encirclement was, is revealed by casting a glance at the two countries invited by Britain for this purpose: Poland had been offering repeatedly since 1919 to "pre-emptively" strike at Germany from the East. In spite of that – or just because of that, Poland became an important piece in the British game. The Soviet Union had openly threatened all non-Communist states with destruction. In spite of that – or just because of that – Britain was trying to secure their military assistance against Germany.

Furthermore, just how offensive this encirclement was intended to be, is also evident from the diplomatic talks with Foreign Minister Beck in London. Not enough for Lord Halifax to have Beck's promise of support in the case of a German-British war, in every other conflict in which Germany became embroiled, Poland was to fight as well, and she moreover was to revise her rejection of Soviet assistance. Furthermore she was to change the Polish-Rumanian agreement, which was directed against Moscow, into an anti-German pact.[1029] Even Beck refused to take that many vague risks all at the same time. Lord Halifax propelled this policy onward, although he knew and recognised that neither Hitler nor Mussolini wanted war. [1029]

To state more precisely the situation: the British government was pushing the Polish Foreign Minister into the widening possibilities of a likely war, and they put their signature to the reciprocal guarantee knowing full well that Beck wanted to humiliate Hitler and set conditions, which would only lead to a worsening of the crisis.[1030] Chamberlain was also following the same course:

> "The Prime Minister [Chamberlain] agreed that the gravest matters were at stake, namely, the future of the two countries. It was essential that they should not find themselves left with the worst of both worlds, namely, to find that they had provoked Germany without at the same time providing themselves with effective defence." [1029]

The outcome of the London talks was the conclusion of a mutual guarantee agreement; according to the terms, Poland also committed herself to assist Britain unconditionally, irrespective of the aggressor.

The general feeling of the public at large and of the government in the principal capitals at this time was reported by, amongst others, the American Chargé d'Affaires, Geist, on 6 April 1939:

> "The peaceful atmosphere of the German capital presented a stark contrast to Paris and London, where rumors of war and talk of war were the dominant themes. There was general confidence in Berlin that it would be possible to keep the peace in 1939."[1031]

On 23 April 1939, the British Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, Ogilvie-Forbes commented in his concluding remarks of a report about the fiftieth birthday of Adolf Hitler that it appeared to him that "the acclamation by the masses as a whole seemed artificial and apathetic, and not savouring of that enthusiasm which constitutes an essential factor in any nation which may be called upon at a moment's notice to face the prospect of war."[1032]

The Policy of Rumours and of Encirclement from March to August 1939

Next to the diplomatic endeavours, an important part in preparing for the Second World War was played by the rumours, spread systematically, and the vilification about the alleged objectives of German foreign policy, of German troop movements, of German armament efforts and of German plans for world domination. After the *Anschluss* of Austria to the Reich, British diplomats brought Czecho-Slovakia into play, which "took him [Hitler] by surprise."[1033] False rumours of German troop movements had set off the May 1938 crisis. As a result, Czecho-Slovakia mobilised her army and kept the army at war strength for a whole month, irrespective of the clear refutation of the rumours. All the East European nations, and particularly Rumania and Poland, were thrown into a state of alarm with fictitious German plans for an offensive, and the neighbouring countries were urgently requested to state whether or not they would fight in the war that was imminent. The British press did not show itself ungenerous after the Munich conference in 1938 and "gave much space to the problem of the Ukraine" and to the "German aspirations" relating to this; hinting, at the

same time, no doubt as a way to startle the USSR, "that this territory was not within the British sphere of interest. Even remarks by members of the Cabinet were along the same lines."[1034] On 10 March 1939, Stalin had, in his speech to the eighteenth Communist Party Congress – to say it in the words of a British propagandist –

> "expressed his certainty that, with all the reports by foreign reporters on German ambitions with regard to the Ukraine – that is, reports such as I myself have written – the wish was father to the thought."[1035]

At that time Stalin stated these very words:

> "The uproar raised over the Soviet Ukraine is characteristic of the British, French and North American press. The representatives of this press were shouting themselves hoarse that the Germans were marching on the Soviet-Ukraine, that they were at present in possession of the so-called Carpatho-Ukraine, with a population of approximately 700,000, and that the Germans would carry out, no later than by spring of this year, the annexation of the Soviet-Ukraine, with a population of more than 30 million, to the so-called Carpatho-Ukraine. It seems that the aim of this suspicious clamouring was to infuriate the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere and to provoke a conflict with Germany, although no apparent reasons existed…
>
> It is even more characteristic that certain politicians and representatives of the press in Europe and in the United States of America who, having lost patience with waiting for the anticipated 'campaign against the Soviet-Ukraine,' have turned to exposing the real background of the non-interventionist policy. They explain quite frankly and put it in black and white that they felt very "let down" by the Germans, since they, instead of advancing further to the East, against the Soviet Union, have now – just imagine – turned toward the West and are demanding colonies…"[1036]

On 19 May 1939 and in spite of the repeated denials both by Stalin and the German press, Winston Churchill again made references to the danger of "a German attack upon the Ukraine" in the House of Commons,[1037] and once again without the smallest shred of factual evidence.

Thus the tendencies were becoming more and more obvious toward the creation of an "'anti-aggression' front of 'democratic' States," which included the USSR, from those British forces – such as Churchill, Duff Cooper, Vansittart, Eden... –

> "who want a decisive conflict with Germany...[and] who are definitely preparing for a war and regard Soviet Russia as a State with large reserves and potential military power." [1034]

It was not in Germany, but rather in Great Britain and in the USA that

> "war was at the centre of deliberations and talks."[1038]

Just Poland alone received in the summer of 1939 at least 49 alleged secret reports about an imminent attack; always bound up with the question as to what would be Poland's intentions. Already in March 1939 Polish newspapers had "to warn about the spreading of rumours that are causing

unrest amongst the people. Arrests of panic-mongers take place regularly."[1039]

At the beginning of July 1939, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs stated in reply to the British Ambassador in Warsaw:

> "The number of rumours saying that the Germans were about to march into Poland had now reached forty-nine. He had conferred with the Chief of the General Staff, and it was subsequently decided that not a single Polish soldier should be mobilised."[1040]

At the same time the French General Staff was inundated with similar "messages" concerning France.

Nobody could describe this systematically pursued purposive policy as endeavours for peace. Every psychologist is well aware of what it means to "place the concept 'war' at the centre of deliberations and talks." Added to this, there are some governments who, for reasons of internal affairs, no longer dared to practice a policy of appeasement, as this would have been the end of their Cabinet.[1041]

Here are a few illustrations for these rumours:

After 15 March 1939:

> a) "But the British government is being swept along by the rapidly growing groundswell of public indignation in the country. A deluge of rumours inundates the British government. The British files are filled with messages and news about the Germans' new plans in the East."[1042]
>
> b) "Straight after Hitler had entered Prague, rumours emerged that the Reich, directly after playing the Slovak card, wanted to lead off with the Croat card in the same manner, in order to establish itself on the Adriatic." [1042]

c) April 1939:

> "Rumours are following one on the heels of the other. The Polish Military Attaché in Berlin tells the British Chargé d'Affaires that the German army is ready to march. The French General Staff is informed by Swiss sources that the Reich plans a sudden attack against France." [1042]

d) Lord Halifax in a confidential report to President Roosevelt on 4 April 1939:

> "...the British fleet might at any moment be the object of a Nazi lightning attack."[1043]
>
> e) "... in spite of rumours of German plans for the invasion of the Ukraine and Holland, Switzerland and Rumania …"[1044]
>
> f) "... despite various rumours ... as regards Danzig..."[1045]

Definite:

> "The German Government are contemplating securing the return of Danzig to the Reich by Herr Hitler's birthday, April 20th." [1045]
>
> "Towards the end of June, another rumour suggested that a German coup in Danzig was about to take place."[1046]
>
> "When the putsch failed to materialise, it was then covered up with clumsy excuses as, for example, that the Führer had retreated faced with the warnings and the determination from the

democracies."[1047]

To stir up some action, Lord Halifax made this prognosis on 12 June 1939 to the Soviet Ambassador:

> "It seems to me that Herr Hitler will find it difficult to face the Nuremberg Conference without first having made an attempt to solve the Danzig problem, and that, if this is so, we must expect July and August to be disturbed months."[1048]

Maisky saw through these unfounded digs quite clearly, having not remained unaware, on the basis of several other indications, that Halifax was aiming at getting the Soviet Union involved in those "disturbed months" of July and August, instead of taking measures to free the atmosphere from conflict.[1049] Already in a previous conversation, held in Geneva on 22 May 1939, Maisky had felt obliged to retort that Halifax evidently did not understand very well the psychology of men like Hitler.

> "He was not at all a fool. He [Hitler] would never engage in a war if he thought he might lose it. Even our present negotiations were forcing him to display a certain care: so far, for example, he had not attacked Poland. But if a triple pact of mutual assistance were concluded Hitler would be obliged to retreat."[1050]

It was the British politicians who were continually leaking explosive clichés to the "free press" and would thus point international tension in the direction of detonation. Level-headed and responsible commentators on politics and current affairs were gradually silenced, even if it was only for the reason, at least at first, that they were not selling anything sensational or thrilling. In the end, only those were regarded as patriotic and peaceable who would speak out in favour of no compromise in the sense of humiliating Germany. This concerned the authoritarian countries like Poland as indeed it did also concern the "democratic governments," which were sustained by "public opinion" and were easily "toppled." Just how easily especially the appeasement politicians in the British government could be intimidated with a nod in the direction of bringing down the government, is described by the British historian A.J.P. Taylor:

> "They [the government] never attached practical value to the Soviet alliance; and they drifted into negotiations unwillingly, driven on by agitation in Parliament and in the country.
>
> Now the British were already committed – their hands tied not so much by their formal alliance with Poland, as by the resolution of British public opinion..."[1051]

The British government did not content themselves with the "wave of rumours" of alleged German marching orders toward the East and the West[1052] (in any case, there is no trace of attempts from the British

government to counteract any rumours), but resumed their diplomatic encirclement of Germany after the guarantee pledge to Poland: On 9 March 1939 they initiated diplomatic talks with Moscow with the aim of militarily committing the USSR in Central Europe. Heedless of others, and without any hesitation, that very power was thus dragged into the quarrels – comparatively so ridiculous – of the European nations which must be regarded by every European with any insight as the biggest threat to the order of the European nations. The British government were promising to the Netherlands, Switzerland, Rumania and Greece a guarantee of independence, and they tried to include Turkey and Yugoslavia as well. They were evading the German-Italian efforts to achieve peace, they demanded in April 1939, applying heavy pressure, that Sweden join a blockade against Germany in the event of war, and they reinforced Roosevelt's "moral declaration of war" (the request to Hitler and Mussolini made on 15 April 1939 to give a non-aggression pledge to a whole host of states, even outside Europe). [1052]

> "On April 14 the British Government made an official proposal to the Soviet Government that it should give Poland and Rumania the same kind of unilateral guarantee that Britain and France had given Poland on March 31, and Rumania and Greece on April 13."[1053]

A "same kind of unilateral guarantee" meant likewise: ignoring the question of aggressor, transferring decision-making powers about war and peace in Europe to Warsaw, and making a decision for war easier for the Polish leadership.

On the occasion of a visit to London in April 1939, the Rumanian Foreign Minister Gafencu recommended to the British that they should declare that a change of the British attitude toward Germany would depend on a rearrangement of the Czech situation, on which Hitler seemed prepared to negotiate – alas to no avail. Instead, Gafencu was requested to extend the Polish-Rumanian Treaty to become directed against Germany.[1054]

Following the recommendations from Washington to introduce compulsory military service prior to the announced Reichstag speech to be given by Hitler on 28 April 1939, the British government decided to take this step two days before and "actually announced the condition of a danger of war." [1052] In this way, London had deliberately created a situation that would not only have prevented Hitler from giving way, but which was bound to provoke. This policy was all the more serious at this stage, as now

there was no going back, not for their own government and not for the others' government, also because Great Britain and France had already started working toward incorporating the USSR into the anti-German coalition.

Neville Chamberlain introduced conscription on 26 April 1939, without Germany giving any cause for this. It was done without consulting Parliament, and he justified taking this step "into a definite zone of war" with the excuses of wanting merely "to avoid the charge of rejecting his [Hitler's] advances" and of not having done more.[1055] The importance that Chamberlain attached to this measure is indicated in the fact that in 1937 the British government had rejected it with the comment that "the Services were much better related to supply than in 1914" and that "wars are won not only now with arms and men, they are won with the reserves of resources and credit."[1056] British industry was not to be weakened and conscription – as it was expressly stated in 1937 – was only to be brought in after entering "a definite zone of war." [1056]

What was Chamberlain's reaction to the warnings, made since March 1939, from English circles in high places to beware of giving Germany any cause to feel encircled and to be on his guard against "bringing in Russia, which might provoke immediate war"? Chamberlain professed on 26 March 1939,

> "... to the most profound distrust of Russia. I have no belief whatever in her ability to maintain an effective offensive, even if she wanted to. And I distrust her motives, which seem to me to have little connection with our ideas of liberty, and to be concerned only with getting everyone else by the ears. Moreover, she is both hated and suspected by many of the smaller States, notably by Poland, Rumania, and Finland."[1057]
>
> "... that a Russian alliance might divide the Balkan resistance to Germany and that, if it drove Spain over to the Axis, we might thereby lose more in the West than we should gain in the East." [1057]

Yet, Chamberlain did not only consent to coalition talks with that selfsame partner who "was playing power politics rather than seeking peace," [1057] but he even intensified the tripartite negotiations that played "such a great part in the events which directly preceded the outbreak of the Second World War."[1058] Undoubtedly he did so under pressure from the "public" (or rather, the opinion steerers of the press), from the party leaders and from the Foreign Office. But it was his responsibility. Also, he fully understood, as indeed did Lord Halifax and the French government, the

dangers for Poland and Rumania, which the British policy evoked for these countries. Halifax put it candidly into these words in his memoirs:

> "Their [the Polish and the Rumanian government's] fear of the Soviet was at least as great as, and probably greater than, their fear of Germany. An intelligent rabbit would hardly be expected to welcome the protection of an animal ten times its own size, and whom it credited with the habits of a boa-constrictor."[1059]

While on 1 November 1938 Halifax had affirmed in a letter to Phipps, his Ambassador in Paris, that "Poland can never ally herself with Soviet Russia"[1060] and while already earlier, indeed in May 1938, in the face of the Sudeten crisis, these topics had been extensively debated in Paris,[1061] Beck's talks in London, at the beginning of April 1939, revealed anew that Poland did not fear Germany, but rather the Soviets. In spite of that, Chamberlain and Halifax were constantly talking their Polish partner into believing in the "German threat," and they tried to impose on him Soviet assistance, thereby quite clearly disregarding Poland's vital interests.

Churchill was trying recklessly, although not a member of the government at the time, to obtain for the Red Army the right of transit through the Eastern European countries.

> "Above all, time must not be lost. Ten or twelve days have already passed since the Russian offer was made. The British people, who have now, at the sacrifice of honoured, ingrained custom, accepted the principle of compulsory military service, have a right, in conjunction with the French Republic, to call upon Poland not to place obstacles in the way of a common cause. Not only must the full co-operation of Russia be accepted, but the three Baltic States, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, must also be brought into association."[1062]

On 18 May 1939, Churchill telephoned the Soviet Ambassador:

> "'Tomorrow,' he said, 'there will be a foreign policy debate in Parliament. I intend to speak, and to draw attention to the unsatisfactory way the negotiations with Russia are being carried on… But before speaking on this subject in public I would like to know from you what exactly are the Soviet Government's proposals which Chamberlain doesn't want to accept? There are many rumours going about!'"[1063]

Having acquainted himself with the Soviet proposals, Churchill declared afterwards:

> "I should think that they are all acceptable." [1063]

Winston Churchill made the additional remark in his memoirs:

> "When events are moving at such speed and in such tremendous mass as at this juncture, it is wise to take one step at a time. The alliance of Britain, France and Russia would have struck deep alarm into the heart of Germany in 1939, and no one can prove that war might not even then have been averted. The next step could have been taken with superior power on the side of the Allies."[1064]

Looking at this past history, can there remain any doubt as to what Winston Churchill had in mind as the "next step" that he would have taken? Churchill explained further:

> "It was a pity not to have placed him [Hitler] in this awkward position, which might well have cost him his life…
>
> If, for instance, Mr. Chamberlain on receipt of the Russian offer had replied, 'Yes. Let us three band together and break Hitler's neck' or words to that effect, Parliament would have approved, Stalin would have understood, and history might have taken a different course." [1064]

Anthony Eden volunteered to go to Moscow in order to complete the negotiations with the Soviets, but Chamberlain rejected the proposals.[1065] Lord Halifax tried once again to induce the Soviet Ambassador on 22 May 1939 in Geneva, on the occasion of the Council of the League of Nations' sessions, to accept the British suggestion of giving Soviet guarantees to the Eastern European countries and to convince him of the risk that a full mutual military alliance involved:

> "Then all of a sudden Halifax took it into his head to try to frighten me. Such a pact [the triple pact of mutual assistance, as proposed by the USSR, concerning all the East European countries] might arouse Hitler to fury, he would begin to shout about 'encirclement of Germany,' this would unite the whole German people around him, and he would launch a war. In this way we would ourselves provoke precisely what we wanted to avert by our actions."[1066]

But in July 1939, "Hitler having already made numerous small diplomatic retreats,"[1067] London had already disassociated themselves also from this realisation or, rather, from this restraint. In the second half of July 1939, a political agreement between Britain, France and the USSR opened up military negotiations, which were offensive in their design.

This agreement of 24 July, which was to come into force once a military convention had been concluded, would have committed Great Britain, France and the USSR to immediate mutual assistance in the event of war (without waiting for any measures from the League of Nations), that is, in the case of an act of direct or "indirect" aggression by Germany against one of the signatory powers or "against another European state" – inasmuch as an "interested party" were to call any one action (this might even be a peaceful unification) as to be "threatening" the independence or neutrality of that nation, and were to "respond" militarily.

With the help of this agreement text any "interested party" could single out any situation whatever and interpret it either as "neutrality being threatened" or as a "threat to independence" or as "indirect aggression" or as "a threat of violence," even when the countries rejected such an

"interpretation." According to this agreement text, a European war and, in the wake of it, a world war was bound to be triggered, for example, if an "interested party" defined the voluntary relinquishing of Danzig to Germany by Poland or a German-Russian trade agreement or the giving of moral (not even material-financial!) support by Germany to Finish, Latvian, Lithuanian or Estonian right-wing parties as "neutrality being threatened" or "indirect aggression." Given that the draft treaty of 17 June 1939 between Britain and France was already formulated in such a way that any miniature state in Europe could have picked a fight with Germany and triggered a war on all fronts, this political accord with the Soviets no longer even necessitated a row between Germany and one of her neighbours. The Reich government could have employed any action whatsoever – according to the wording of this agreement – with the same result: Even friendly endeavours toward her neighbours would have produced an automatic sequence of events arising from the military alliance of the enemy. Opinions of neighbouring countries would have been declared invalid. Furthermore, the fact that – as Kennard wrote from Warsaw –

> "Poles of all classes are obsessed with fear of Communism and ... no Pole would ever expect to recover any territory occupied by Soviet troops..."[1068]

did not interest London. From now on, just the opinion of an "interested party" counted, *i.e.* of Great Britain, of France or of the USSR.[1069]

> "At the end of July [1939] the Reich must make a decision. The sending of the Western military mission [to Moscow] puts an even more realistic and more threatening complexion on the negotiations between Moscow and the West."[1070]
>
> "The French thought in more practical terms. They were only concerned to get the Red Army involved in conflict with Hitler, and did not mind if this were done at the expense of Poland."[1071]

This, of course, did interest the British Foreign Secretary equally, who was trying to secure the Soviet Union's involvement by resorting to alarmist news reports about an imminent German attack on Poland, these having proved repeatedly effective in the past.[1072] The military talks with Stalin culminated in the reality that France, then Britain also, had agreed to the handing over of the Baltic States to the USSR and, at the last moment, they offered East Poland or, rather, the whole of Poland and Rumania, without the consent of the countries concerned.[1073] It is of considerable significance that the political agreement of 24 July 1939 and the planned military convention did not fail because of reservations from Britain and France, but rather because of the refusal of Stalin, who declined to pull Britain's

chestnuts out of the fire and to march through Poland, Rumania, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia without those countries' consent, while Britain was promising, in the event, to send only two divisions as support. [1073]

In this way Chamberlain, who had already been talking since April 1939 of a "zone which was neither peace nor war,"[1074] not only aggravated the European situation, but from 9 March onward, at the latest from mid-July 1939, made it hopeless. Moreover, he himself did not believe that an alliance with the Soviet Union would preserve the peace.[1075] In mid-July he defined his position thus:

> "Danzig is, of course, at present the danger spot. I have told Musso plainly that, if Hitler tries to get it by force, it will mean starting the European war. To which M. replies 'let the Poles agree that Danzig goes to the Reich, and I will do my best to get a peaceful agreed solution.' But that is not good enough…"[1076]

So this solution "was not good enough"! On 1 September 1939, speaking in the House of Commons, he added this:

> "We have no quarrel with the German people, except that they allow themselves to be governed by a Nazi government. As long as that government exists and pursues the methods it has so persistently followed during the last two years, there will be no peace in Europe.
> 'They were fighting,' he told the Commons, for principles, 'the destruction of which would involve the destruction of all possibility of peace and security,' and not just for the 'far-away city' of Danzig."[1077]

Stating this, Chamberlain unequivocally admitted that the British government, already before the Danzig dispute, had decided on a course which was resolved on the "destruction of the Nazi regime" because of "Hitler's foreign policy since 1938." Thus London now arrogated the right to determine for another state, in diplomatic relations with them, what form of government was allowed and which was not. In reality, "not a trace of an ideological motive" can be found in Chamberlain.[1076] Yes, Chamberlain knew and acknowledged that Hitler had been seriously contemplating an Anglo-German agreement, and that he had worked out a generous, no time-limit, settlement with Poland.[1078]

> "...but there is no sign of any haste on the part of Germany."[1079]

The time was past when even Chamberlain himself had uttered these words:

> "The past treatment of Germany had been neither generous nor wise; unless this strong and virile people can be induced, in partnership with others, to improve the general lot, there will be neither peace nor progress in Europe in the things that make life worth living."[1080]

Since then, Chamberlain had let himself be turned into the exponent of a policy which endorsed the "neither generous nor wise" treatment of Germany and thus stood against "peace and progress in Europe." No longer were questions of rights and justice the decisive factor for London – neither in 1938 nor in 1939 – but "British principles." Chamberlain drew his courage

a. from the "positive assurance of American support" and timely help, and from "Roosevelt's rising tone,"
b. from the increase in armaments since "Munich,"
c. from the "decline in German finances" and
d. from the hope of a "collapse of the German home front."[1081]

Germany could not hold similar "hopes" with regard to her enemies, could not base her policies on suchlike expectations.

In the middle of July 1939, Great Britain passed the Overseas Guarantee Trade Act providing export credits of over 60 million pounds, which was to serve the purpose of making the purchasing of war material from Great Britain easier for Poland, Greece, Rumania and Turkey. Although in the end this law did not come to fruition, it did at least give Poland a considerable psychological boost, especially since the Inspector-General of the British Army, General Ironside, arrived on 19 July 1939 in Warsaw for additional General Staff talks,[1082] and especially when on 3 August London granted Poland a credit of 8.163 million pounds for purchases in the United Kingdom. [1082]

Based on the impressions formed from closely following the world press and on his familiarity with the proceedings within British secret diplomacy in the summer months of 1939, the British Ambassador in Berlin, who had gained an accurate insight into the official stance and, to a large degree, also into internal matters of the Reich capital, conveyed a grave warning to his Foreign Secretary of State. In this communication from 18 July 1939, Henderson charged his government, in rather candid wording, with nothing less than pursuing a policy of war:

> "It is very conceivable that the wise men of the future will say that we should have made war on Germany in 1939, just as many now say that we should have done so in 1938. But unless and until I am informed to the contrary, I express my opinions on the basis that we wish to avoid war, if possible.
>
> If that is axiomatic, our right policy in my view is to show the utmost firmness combined with an absence of anything which can only be construed here as deliberate provocation or intention on

our part to wage a preventive war, or a fixed desire to humiliate Hitler himself. If we drive him into a corner he will not be able to extricate himself without war…

Hitler may already believe that Britain means to make war on Germany in any case. If he does not, it will not take very much more to make him think so. He has the advantage of being able to take the initiative when and where he likes, if he is convinced of that. Nor, honestly, do I think it politic or even fair unduly to stimulate the Poles.

So many people, such as the Otto Strassers and others of this world, are seeking with intense pertinacity to drive us to war with Germany. I sometimes fear lest their campaign to that end may unduly influence our counsels at home."[1083]

There was nothing mentioned in that secret communication that Hitler was threatening Britain or other countries with the central idea of "the conquest of living space" or suchlike, or that Hitler's intention was "to make war." Indeed, Hitler had "contributed little to the course of diplomacy between April and August 1939."[1084]

On 8 August 1939, the British newspaper *Daily Mail* noted that there were missing

"any statements from the Prime Minister as to whether he approves of these speeches that were made against Danzig and against Germany, and which inevitably are pushing towards war. Objectively speaking, it must be pointed out that from the German side there have been no speeches made by any leading statesmen against Poland, such as was given by the Marshal [Rydz-Śmigły – 'Danzig is a Polish lung'] last Sunday [6 August] in Cracow. If Britain is letting things drift any further along these lines, she will incur some blame, come the explosion."[1085]

Was it not the British government that had wilfully interfered in these foreign affairs, in this far-away city, thus making themselves jointly responsible? Had Chamberlain really acted according to what his party colleague, Winston Churchill, had in mind, who had recommended in 1933 to adjust "this defiance of history and reason" (the East German border as established by Versailles), and who had called this "one of the greatest practical objectives of European peace-seeking diplomacy"?[1086]

For British politics, the burning questions of rights and humanitarian issues in the German-Polish relations were no longer considered worth their attention in 1939, let alone their commitment, although Great Britain would still have been under the obligation, even at this stage, to provide for the protection of the minorities in Poland, because of the Versailles resolutions and because of Britain's membership of the Commission of Three in the League of Nations for Danzig. The Treaty for the Protection of Minorities and its observance had been, after all, the condition for the recognition of the Polish State. The letter from Clemenceau, President of the Supreme Council of the Versailles Peace conference, to the Polish Prime Minister Paderewski dated 24 June 1919, calls to Poland's

> "attention the fact that the Polish nation owes the recovery of its independence to the victory of the Allied Powers. This fact, however, was to put quite specific obligations upon the Great Powers, which were to see to it that – by guaranteeing certain political-humanitarian fundamental rights – the stability of this region, in which they had established permanently a new order, would not be jeopardised. Naturally, these obligations on the Great Powers were closely connected to their duties toward the defeated nations, which needed to be implemented. The securing of internal stability and the maintaining of peace in the Eastern Central-European region with an internationally guaranteed protection of the minorities was to be given priority."[1087]

But this seemed long forgotten. Recognising German minority grievances as justifiable was now called "betrayal of the national interests of Poland" and a "threat to Polish freedom and independence." Poland's desire to annex East Prussia and the Oder territories was henceforth tolerated; indeed, it was secretly encouraged.[1088] The persecution of the German ethnic minority in Poland, in the meantime, came to be regarded by the British as a "minor point."[1089] With the remark that "the Poles would never allow anybody to send them a Runciman,"[1090] the German grievances were rashly dismissed without investigating or stopping the Polish de-Germanisation policy. At the same time London was interfering in German-Polish relations by imposing on Poland an unconditional guarantee directed exclusively against Germany. Neither Great Britain nor the United States of America have taken – apart from a superficial effort by London on the last day before the outbreak of war – a single step to subdue the Polish chauvinism which had been boiling over for months.

The following three quotations, although referring to Czecho-Slovakia, are also describing pertinently the British-French policy on Poland up to the outbreak of the war in 1939:

Lord Halifax had stated on 22 May 1938 to German Ambassador von Dirksen,

> "that in the case of a German entry into Czecho-Slovakia, in whatever circumstances, even in the event of serious acts of provocation by the Czechs, the French would march against [Germany] ...
>
> In the event of a European conflict, it was impossible to foresee whether Britain would not be drawn into it."[1091]

"In whatever circumstances, even in the event of serious acts of provocation by the Czechs" – the man speaking these words was the one principally responsible for the *carte blanche* given to Poland ten months later.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker related his conversation of 8 July 1938 with the American Ambassador in Berlin, Hugh Wilson:

> "It had never been stated publicly in Britain, or even in France, that the Czechs must not go beyond a certain limit of patience if they did not wish finally to gamble away the support of the Western Powers in the event of a conflict...
>
> Wilson entirely agreed with this and remarked that British politics had been like this for the past 10 years. Although in fact not wanting war, nothing of what was really necessary was done to avoid it."[1092]

A German historian on the Sudeten crisis in 1938:

> "Had Britain's staying away been definite, no big international conflict over Czecho-Slovakia would have developed in the first place. In reality, the decision was left up to Great Britain, not whether to remain neutral in a European war (that was quite impossible), but whether a European war was actually going to take place."[1093]

It is thus obviously valid to transfer these three quotations to Poland in the year 1939, especially since

> "on the whole it is indeed a matter of complete indifference to the London government whether or not Danzig or the Corridor is German or Polish."[1094]

But as it turned out to be, the London government was not exactly indifferent on this issue. Of course they were not interested in either Danzig or the Corridor as such, but they were concerned that the "Nazi pestilence" – that means: the German competition – be "wiped out" or rather be "eliminated," according to the "principles" of the British policy on Europe.

Britain contributed nothing at all during the whole course of 1939 to diffuse the ever worsening European situation, but rather initiated several disastrous steps to exacerbate it. As mentioned before, even the British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, could not hold back his doubts about such a policy. On 23 May 1939, he wrote to his colleague of many years' standing, Kirkpatrick:

> "Have the Foreign Office or His Majesty's Government any views...? It is not enough to say 'No' to the Dictator in a case where there is a grievance. The remedy has also to be found. Otherwise the 'No' has but an ephemeral value."[1095]

Of course, Henderson had been left in ignorance about the fact that his Foreign Secretary, Halifax, had only two days before, on 21 May, once more told his "proposals" in Geneva to Carl J. Burckhardt in no uncertain terms:

> "... the British would fight for Poland in any German-Polish war regardless of the origins of the conflict."[1096]

The British government could not hide behind "being ignorant" of the happenings in Poland that had for many months been discussed in the world press: Their own Ambassadors had – upholding their duty of looking after

the interests of Great Britain – repeatedly warned about the unpredictable Polish rashness and had recommended putting pressure on Warsaw.[1097] This is what Kennard telegraphed from Warsaw on 30 March 1939, one day before the statement was made about the guarantee to Poland:

> "It is of course unlikely that the Polish Government would deliberately provoke Germany. But in the present state of feeling here the possibility of some impulsive action cannot altogether be excluded."[1098]

Kennard on 16 August 1939:

> "As I was not entirely satisfied with those parts of my conversation with Mr. Beck relating to the press and the minority, I took these matters up again this morning with Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs who deals especially with these questions...
>
> I felt that the Polish Government should make every effort to prevent the appearance in the Polish press of any article which..., might give extreme irritation to Herr Hitler and that the authorities concerned there should be requested to avoid any unduly energetic measures of repression against the German minority."[1099]

Kennard on 17 August 1939:

> "I have impressed upon these people [the Poles] that at the present moment Hitler seems undecided as to what he will do, and that it is therefore essential that no incident, word in the press or case of maltreatment of the minority, should be allowed to give him a pretext to go off the deep end...
>
> I have even suggested to my American colleague, who has a good deal of influence here, that he should point out that it would do Poland considerable harm in the eyes of public opinion in America should Hitler produce a long list of cases of maltreatment of the German minority here or in any way show that Poland has behaved unreasonably...
>
> You may rely on me to do my best to control extreme feelings here, but one cannot of course push them too far – in fact it would be useless to do so."[1100]

Henderson on 16 August 1939:

> "What Hitler says about his attitude towards the press is unfortunately true. If we do want to avoid a catastrophe, we must face the fact. We will certainly have war if the press talks about Hitler yielding to intimidation. Surely if the press were told that quite clearly, it would realise its responsibilities. History will judge the press generally to have been the principal cause of the war...
>
> I am convinced that Hitler was speaking the truth when he talked about holding his generals back this year. Of all Germans, believe it or not, Hitler is the most moderate so far as Danzig and the Corridor are concerned.
>
> If there is to be a truce (and it is the last hope), the ill-treatment of the German minority in Poland must be stopped. I wish some English newspapers would send correspondents out to see for themselves and for you. Weizsäcker has always been very bitter to me on this subject. Our embassy at Warsaw knows nothing about it, just as I know nothing about what happens in the German provinces. How can it? Warsaw with its civilised and intelligent, not to say astute clique with which one consorts there, is one thing. Outside in the country the Poles are an utterly uncivilised lot. 'Calm and restraint.' Yes, doubtless, at the top and if words mean anything. But elsewhere, no. I have heard too many tales from well-disposed neutrals to believe a word of it."[1101]

But not even these recommendations could induce the British government to inform themselves and to caution the Poles to show restraint. Only on 26 August did London make the suggestion that the Polish leadership should approach the German government whether they would "contemplate making an exchange of populations."[1102] At the same time, Poland should permit entry to neutral observers. Both proposals were to cut the ground from under Hitler's detailed complaints of the ill-treatment of the minority Germans. Although Beck "in principle" saw no objection to the expulsion of the German ethnic minority, he refused, however, "as a first reaction," to have neutral observers, without ever seriously taking up this matter again, whenever it was linked to negotiations. Even a subsequent reference from Kennard to use the roundabout way of involving the Pope and the "excellent impression on public opinion abroad" failed to change Beck's mind. [1102] It was the very same day when the Polish government, "in view of the nature of Hitler's language... in his conversation with Henderson on 25 August," had decided internally on immediate mobilisation.[1103] Poland had once more "developed an unfortunate liking for the method of pursuing political aims with violence or threats," which has been verifiably in evidence ever since the time of the re-establishing of the Polish nation in 1918.[1104]

It was not only the British Ambassador, Henderson, who was singularly impressed on learning that Hitler was willing, even yet on 29 August, to negotiate with the Poles the question of an exchange of populations.[1105] He had obviously no knowledge that, already during the summer of 1939, the German citizens residing in Poland had received the advice to send their women and children to Germany.

> "In the last week of August the [German] Embassy [in Warsaw] was also to warn the unemployed or 'those of whom it may be assumed that they incur special danger' to repatriate. Those who remained were to try to protect themselves against the persecutions which were regarded as inevitable. Party functionaries and journalists were to seek refuge in the homes of friendly nationals of neutral states."[1106]

Henderson admitted that "we led her [Poland] far up the garden path as it is,"[1107] and thus London had assumed the leadership and responsibility for this development:

> "If war is fated to be, then it will be. But it will be the stupidest of wars and history will say that the world was quite mad...
>
> The Poles will, I believe and fear, get a terrible hammering, and I cannot see what they can definitely gain out of it. To enlarge their frontiers will merely mean trouble, possibly from both

sides, in the next generation. I only pray that we shall not regret leading them up the garden path for the satisfaction of kicking Hitler and his Nazi gangsters in the pants."[1108]

The Extension of the Blank Check on 25 August 1939

After the failure of the British-French-Soviet military talks and the startling conclusion of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact – it was not the kind of "alliance" which the Western Powers had hoped to conclude! – Europe was found in diplomatic circumstances which none of the parties had foreseen. How did the leading British politicians, Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, view this new situation, and how did they react?

The U.S. Ambassador in London, Kennedy, reported to his Secretary of State, Hull, on 23 August 1939, on his recent talk with the British Prime Minister, in which Chamberlain had said that there was nothing he could do in getting the Poles to make any concessions. Kennedy had added these words:

> "If the President [of the USA] is contemplating any action for peace, it seems to me the place to work is on Beck in Poland, and to make this effective, it must happen quickly. I see no other possibility."[1109]

Kennedy a few days later:

> "Frankly he [Chamberlain] is more worried about getting the Poles to be reasonable than the Germans. He feels there is a great body of public opinion in England, headed probably by Eden and Churchill, who will suggest to the Poles that they give up nothing and that they have Hitler on the run. This, of course, will mean war, but in the meantime he is urging Henderson to keep telling Hitler that, after all, the Danzig situation is a small item and that what really needs to be done is to work out the whole European economic political problem."[1110]

On 24 August 1939, Neville Chamberlain admitted in the House of Commons that he had not as yet tried to get a factual assessment of the German grievances about Poland's treatment of the German ethnic minority.[1111] Having put herself in this position, it would have been vital for Great Britain to have made intensive efforts at objective mediation of disagreements and to curb all threats (mobilisation, malicious press campaigns and suchlike). None of that happened. Neither did Chamberlain restrain the British press, having acknowledged that their course of action "of course, will mean war," nor even made the attempt to restrain. On the contrary! On this memorable 24 August 1939, Chamberlain, for his part, did

also deliberately give false information to the Members of Parliament in the House of Commons and, therefore, has once again leaked to the press inflammatory slogans, which "of course, will mean war." He said in his speech:

> "The international position has steadily deteriorated until today we find ourselves confronted with the imminent peril of war...
>
> The German press declared that Danzig could not be the subject of any conference or any compromise and that it must come back to the Reich at once and unconditionally...
>
> They [the German press] published circumstantial accounts of the alleged ill-treatment of Germans living in Poland. Now we have no means of checking the accuracy of those stories, but we cannot help being struck by the fact that they bear a strong resemblance to similar allegations that were made last year in respect of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia...
>
> But I think it will be agreed that, in face of this [German press] campaign, declarations by Polish statesmen have shown great calm and self-restraint. The Polish leaders, while they have been firm in their determination to resist an attack upon their independence, have been unprovocative. They have always been ready, as I am sure they would be ready now, to discuss differences with the German Government, if they could be sure that those discussions would be carried on without threats of force or violence, and with some confidence that, if [an] agreement were reached, its terms would be respected afterwards permanently, both in the letter and in the spirit...
>
> In Berlin the announcement [of a German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact] was hailed, with extraordinary cynicism, as a great diplomatic victory which removed any danger of war, since we and France would no longer be likely to fulfil our obligations to Poland. We felt it our first duty to remove any such dangerous illusion." [242]

"The steady deterioration of the international situation" during the past few months did not, however, induce Chamberlain to readjust British policy, rather he warned against such "dangerous illusions." While Chamberlain was exclusively quoting the "German press" and equating it with "Berlin," he concealed from the Members of Parliament the fact that up to this date Hitler had made no demand for an immediate "unconditional return of Danzig to the Reich" and, altogether, had shown "considerable calm and restraint." Whereas Lord Halifax on 24 August 1939 in the House of Lords still made a crucial distinction between the "aggressive Polish press" and the "attitude of the Polish government," Chamberlain no longer recognised the difference between the German government and the German press, despite the fact that Poland had an equally authoritarian government and that the Polish press – even though from a different basic position than that in Germany – was strictly censored as well. Chamberlain was continuing along the same path when he informed the Members of Parliament in the House of Commons about military preparations in Germany but not, on the other hand, about those in Poland. It was untruthful to maintain that the Polish leaders had been unprovocative and

had always been ready, “as they would be ready now,” “to discuss differences with the German government.” To be sure, Poland had been willing up to January 1939 to hold such discussions – that is, until the British government intervened, when they “feared that Poland might draw closer to Germany.”[1112] The obvious consequence of the unconditional guarantee, foisted upon the Poles and originally not even requested, was that from this time on Poland was no longer prepared “to discuss differences with the German government”! This connection was so obvious that Chamberlain, having had five months to study it thoroughly, must have been aware of it on 24 August. That Poland, by the end of March 1939, was refusing under threat of war all talks with the Reich government must have been equally known to Chamberlain, as well as the fact that the German press reports from September 1938 about the ill-treatment of the Sudeten Germans were factually correct; this had long since been confirmed by Ambassador extraordinary Runciman.[1113]

Falsehoods were bound to lead to further aggravation of the international situation. This all the more, as in his speech Chamberlain had not even considered how one could, with the help of political or diplomatic efforts, “patch matters up” again.

On the contrary, he claimed,

> “...that the time had come when they [the government] must seek the approval of Parliament for further measures of defence.”[1114]

What did his Foreign Secretary do on this memorable 24 August 1939? Lord Halifax had given the Polish Ambassador to understand his clear determination for war in such a way that Raczynski, at that time, “was still terrified of such an attempt.” Halifax

> “did not doubt for a moment that any attempt to patch matters up had been out of the question since the conclusion of the German-Soviet agreement.”[1115]

His Prime Minister had conceded only just previously – without, however, taking up the opportunity – that in Berlin the German-Soviet agreement was hailed as a pact removing the danger of war, and that Britain had been asked to do her part for the avoidance of war. However, Halifax believed, according to the motto:

> “My reason shows me no way out but war...,”[1116]

"that the Poles are not inclined to do this," although "it was absolutely essential for the Poles to get in touch with the Germans... even if they were not ready to discuss Danzig, to start a discussion on minorities or some other subject." In the same communication, the American Ambassador stated more precisely:

> "that England will definitely go to war if Poland starts to fight"[1117]

– but not, therefore, when Poland is being attacked!

Considering the fact that the British government had practically driven Hitler into a situation where he had no other choice but to come to an arrangement with Stalin, Halifax's reaction after 23 August illustrates London's resolve for war quite drastically. In all openness were the "friendly" diplomats given to understand that from now on everything was geared to the "inevitability of war with Germany." This outlook was altogether calculated to encourage the Poles, whose "courage and fighting spirit the Western Powers underrated,"[1118] to renewed provocations. Unofficial, but very influential, circles in Britain stood by Lord Halifax's side.

The Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, told about this:

> "Churchill has been telephoning daily, and this evening Lord Lloyd did likewise. Mr. Harcourt Johnstone came to see me, representing the Liberal Party. All these people express concern that the Poles should not weaken or give in to force; and I have been urging them in return to keep their strange and sometimes incalculable countrymen on the right lines."[1119]
>
> "Besides Dalton and Harcourt Johnstone, I received telephone calls daily from Churchill, Bracken, Sandys and others, in which the same anxieties recurred: would the Prime Minister keep his word to us, and would we ourselves stand firm as the corner-stone of Britain's 'peace front' on the Continent? This attitude [*i.e.* of contempt for any peace policy] was exemplified in the letters, both signed and anonymous, which poured in day after day. In the early stages of the crisis, they had advised us to bomb Danzig flat or to take advantage of the Nazi rally at Tannenberg (which did not in fact take place) to destroy Hitler and his friends with a single well planted bomb."[1120]

And the repercussions?

> "During this anxious time I called almost daily on Lord Halifax, whose confidence I had gained and who from time to time showed clearly that he shared my own view of the situation [rejection of appeasement], though he felt obliged to put to me very different arguments evolved by the inner Cabinet. He usually noted down my comments, evidently as ammunition for use in that forum." [1120]

With the backing of these forces, Lord Halifax began during the last days of peace a further undertaking, which historians tend to define as "dishonest."[1121] (Cf. the chapter: "The Last Days of Peace.")

Although the British government had for a year been receiving from their own diplomats a steady flow of warnings concerning Polish obstinacy,[1122] they had never queried their unconditional guarantee in the event of Poland refusing negotiations. There was only one occasion, when the talks were brought round to this threat: During the visit of the Polish Foreign Minister in London from 4-6 April 1939, when Beck was not prepared to make a pact of mutual assistance with Rumania, which was to take effect in the case of a German attack against Poland, as well as an Hungarian attack against Rumania.[1123] In other words,

> "when the British were dissatisfied, as they felt he [Beck] was not giving the co-operation they felt they must have."[1124]

Thus, the British government was using their guarantee as nothing less than a means of exerting pressure in order to widen the crisis area.

By 25 August 1939, already months of steadily accumulating tension resulting from the attitude of the Poles had passed, and U.S. President Roosevelt had by now addressed an official note to Warsaw in these words:

> "The President expresses the belief that, in the interest of public opinion in the United States, as well as public opinion in other parts of the world, it is in the highest degree important that history should not record, in the event that any military crisis results from the Danzig issue, that the first act of aggression of a military character was brought about by Poland."[1125]

On 23 August Lord Halifax had learnt from the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, that Poland was not going to negotiate, that is to say, he [the Ambassador] "was very sceptical of the value of such action," as long as "we were still engaged in the technique of the nerve war," which might well continue for some little time yet.[1126] One day later he heard from Warsaw that the Polish government had taken "very serious military measures involving mobilisation of practically two-thirds of the Polish army." [1126] In spite of this alarming news, the British government extended on 25 August, on their own initiative, the guarantee to Poland to cases of "any action which threatened indirectly the independence" and "threatened the neutrality" of the countries of Belgium, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia – naturally only by Germany. A few days before, they had still been prepared to sell Poland, or rather Eastern Poland and, consequently, also the Baltic States to the USSR; thus, it was not at all a genuine British concern to secure the independence or neutrality of these states. Therefore, also this passage in the extended Poland guarantee must

have served another purpose than the one professed. Furthermore, the Treaty carried the obligation not to conclude a separate armistice or peace – a clause that until now was only customary in treaties between warring parties.

Novel in this agreement of 25 August was the fact that Chamberlain and Halifax were promising Britain's unconditional support also in the case of an "indirect threat" without, however, clarifying in the published text the precise meaning of this. In the supplementary Secret Protocol, however, Poland had it confirmed that this was directed at the "Free City" of Danzig.

> "Hitler could not know of it, and assumed that Britain would not oppose the return of Danzig to Germany. Beck knew of it, and was able to refuse to discuss the future of Danzig with Germany, knowing that a German move to seize the Free City would be followed by British action in support of Poland. Beck knew that the Secret Protocol was precise and final: 'The case contemplated by Article Two of the Agreement is that of the Free City of Danzig.' Even an indirect threat to Danzig would bring the Treaty into operation."[1127]

Great Britain must have realised, at least during the course of the talks with Moscow, which carried on for months, that Poland feared the USSR, while thinking to be superior to Germany, and though it was further known that Hitler, unlike Stalin, had no intention of annexing Polish land, but had even declared himself willing to guarantee the frontiers and the independence of Poland. In spite of all this, Britain's extended guarantee remained solely aimed at Germany. Therefore, London was demonstrably not concerned about the independence and the assets of Poland! Winston Churchill was to admit later:

> "We ourselves have never guaranteed any particular frontier line to Poland."[1128]
> "We had not gone to war for any particular frontier line…"[1129]

The statement made by Lord Halifax (23 August 1939), in which he called "any attempt to patch matters up" as being "out of the question,"[1130] manifests clearly a desire for war serving British interests, not a desire for service helping Poland.

What has decisively contributed to this British desire for war were the suggestive hints from members of the German Resistance. Through the secret contacts, already established in the year 1934-35, among members from German Ministries (Goerdeler, Erich and Theo Kordt, State Secretary von Weizsäcker and others), who, for their part, had already been arranging conspiracy plans with officers from the Armed Forces and individuals from the German economy and government administration as well as with British

politicians (Churchill, Vansittart, Halifax), the British leadership was reinforced in their belief that "firm language," a determination for war and, at any rate, war itself would bring down the "Hitler-Regime" by a revolution from within Germany.[1131] It was also a contributory factor that Chamberlain, attacked by many circles in Britain and in the USA, believed to be facing the downfall of his premiership, and hence he considered the now opening possibility of an easy victory over Germany and went along with war.

Only when looking at it from these viewpoints, could the Poles, too, become entrapped by the delusion that within a few days of the outbreak of war they would be marching into Berlin, and that the Soviet forces, because of the expected rapid German collapse, would not have enough time to cross the East Polish frontier. But on the other hand, these illusions prove that one was aware in London, Washington and Warsaw just how much the decision "war or peace" was in one's own hands.

The Annihilation of Germany as a War Aim

Since spring of 1939, Britain, allegedly the "protector of small nations," had been trying to stir up the small nations against Germany by giving them all sorts of guarantees, by spreading false reports and thus causing alarm, and by probing and encouraging the resolve of these small nations. This was all bound to increase these countries' insecurity and dangers rather than to alleviate them. Why did Paris and London, for the sake of joining in with Moscow, virtually offer the Baltic and East Poland as a prize to Stalin? Halifax did "fully appreciate the disadvantages and risks of allowing Soviet troops on Polish soil."[1132] The unilateral declaration of war on Germany in the course of the Poland campaign, which had already been decided on in a secret supplementary clause of the Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance, showed that this was not about ethical principles. The later stance of the British government, in particular their joining of military forces with the Soviet Union and the refusal to face up to Stalin's vast territorial demands at the conferences of Moscow, Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam, amplified further the extent of this moral uprooting. One only needs to compare the scale of the unopposed transfer to the Soviets by the Western Allies (absolute sole domination over all of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, participation in controlling the Mediterranean and the Near East) with that of tiny Danzig's desire of returning to the German Reich, which was used by these same Powers as an opportunity to trigger a Second World War!

Despite this background, Lord Halifax professed to be fighting for human rights, for peace, for ideal principles, and he stated on the BBC-London on 7 November 1939:

> "The new world that Britain is trying to make come true would bring about cooperation among all nations, based on equality, on self-respect and on tolerance of the human race. Britain would have to try everything within her means to combine the necessary revisions in a continuously changing world with safeguarding against upsetting the general peace by use of force."[1133]

But that is exactly what he *refused* to be applied in the case of Germany. "Justice," "equality," "self-respect" was called in London that which served the "European balance," ergo, British power interests. A comparison between the war aims, as proclaimed later, and the facts comes

automatically to mind. No sooner had it been openly stated that going to war against Germany was precisely because of her style of government, than it was laid down in the Atlantic Charter that "all peoples" could choose the form of government under which they would want to live. Every postulate drawn up during the Allied War Conferences was disregarded when matters concerned Germany, but also Poland and the other nations of Eastern Europe.

Vansittart, the Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the Foreign Secretary, declared to a member of the German resistance on 31 August 1939, thus the day before the start of the Poland campaign, "trembling with excitement":

> "Britain will be fighting this war to the outmost, and like Samson in the Bible, we will tear down the pillars of the palace and bury all underneath that...
>
> A timely ending of the war [this is probably a misprint; the German says 'Kriegsabbruch' instead of the probably correct word 'Kriegsausbruch' = outbreak of the war], though it might mean, it is true, the death of thousands, it would not mean the death of millions."[1134]

Winston Churchill admitted in November 1939, a few days after Belgium and the Netherlands had made mediation proposals, on the British radio:

> "This war is a British war and its aim is the destruction of Germany."[1135]

Not the destruction of National Socialism! Of course, Churchill did not fail to proclaim the destruction of "Nazi tyranny":

> "This is not a question of fighting for Danzig or fighting for Poland. We are fighting to save a whole world from the pestilence of Nazi tyranny and in defence of all that is most sacred to man."[1136]

If Hitler had set himself as the target of his policy to liberate "the whole world" from the "pestilence of British tyranny" over her empire and the "defence of all that is most sacred to man," what kind of accusations would have been levelled at him?

The British Field Marshal, Lord Milne, warned a few weeks after the beginning of the war

> "against the dangerous theory that we are not fighting the German people. The war in Poland is typical of the inborn brutality of the German Nation on the whole. War is war… I do hope that our striking is tough, manifold and absolutely merciless."[1137]

As a "peace-loving politician," Prime Minister Chamberlain made a rather curious admission in a letter of October 1939:

> "In 3 days last week I had 2,450 letters, and 1,860 of them were 'stop the war' in one form or another...
>
> I was, I confess, anxious when I read Hitler's clever speech [Hitler's peace offer after the Poland campaign], and especially when the first American reaction was reported that he had made

a very attractive series of proposals...”[1138]

Just how much the British government was at pains to sabotage every possibility for peace in pursuit of their war aims, is also clearly shown, among other things, by the reaction to the trip to Europe made by the American Undersecretary of State, Sumner Welles, in February-March 1940. The American Secretary of State Cordell Hull wrote about this:

> “The rumors [about the mission of Sumner Welles in Europe] filled the Allies and small neutrals with dismay lest the President, on Welles’ return, should make a move for peace. Accordingly, on March 16 [1940], Mr. Roosevelt broadcast from the White House to dispel these fears. [Along the same lines,] I had made it clear to the press. Before leaving Rome, Welles issued a press statement that he had not received or conveyed any peace proposals. British Ambassador Lothian came on March 22 [1940] to thank the President and me for what he called the prompt way in which our Government had acted to check and dispel the spread of the ‘peace at any price’ sentiment based on all sorts of rumors about what Welles might do in Europe to bring about a negotiated peace, which would be the equivalent of a German victory.
>
> He said that efforts directed towards bringing about a negotiated peace might injure the British and French war situation.”[1139]

Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty and Minister for Economic Warfare, stated at the St. George’s celebration on 25 April 1940, when toasting England:

> “The coming peace-treaty must be much harsher and more merciless than Versailles. We can make no distinction between Hitler and the German Nation. After victory we must not allow ourselves to be moved by the claims of the Germans that only a few, only the members of the Hitler regime, committed the crimes. We must take Hitler at his word that he is the German Nation.”[1140]

Lord Vansittart, Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the Foreign Office, 1941:

> “Hitler is no accident. He is the natural and continuous product of a breed which from the dawn of history has been predatory and bellicose...
>
> By the grace of God and for the salvation of man, we shall rescue the earth from Germany and Germany from herself.”[1141]

The tenor of his radio talks on the BBC in 1941:

> “Violence and fraud, fraud and violence: this is the old German gospel. The Germans have never pledged their word without breaking it, they have never entered into an agreement without discrediting it, they have not touched an international law of loyalty without having besmirched it. For generations they have destroyed all and every trust among the people.”[1142]

Winston Churchill in the House of Commons on 15 February 1942:

> “This [bringing of the United States into the war] is what I dreamed of, aimed at and worked for, and now it has come to pass.”[1143]

In a letter to Stalin dated 24 January 1944:

> “We never thought of making a separate peace even in the year when we were all alone and could easily have made one without serious loss to the British Empire and largely at your

[Stalin's] expense. Why should we think of it now, when our triple fortunes are marching forward to victory?"[1144]

Russell Grenfell wrote on Churchill's war aims and thereby about those of Great Britain:

"What was left as a war object for Mr. Churchill? There [They] were our previous friends, the extirpation of Nazi tyranny and Prussian militarism...

The tyranny, as such, was not oppressing the British people. That being so, what business was it of theirs if the Germans liked to live under a tyrannical form of Government? Did not the Atlantic Charter declare that the British 'respected the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live'? Therefore, if the Germans did not choose to throw off their Nazi tyranny for themselves, why should a lot of Englishmen have to die in throwing it off for them?

Assuming, however, that the forcible suppression of tyrannies in foreign countries was a British duty, how came it that another tyranny was made a partner of the British in that process? The Communist tyranny in Russia was worse than the Nazi tyranny in Germany; the general condition of the Russian people was far inferior to that of the Germans; slave labour in Russia was on a gigantic scale compared to anything of the sort in Germany...

Yet Mr. Churchill hailed Russia as a most welcome ally when she was brought into the war. One tyrant to help beat another. Clearly, tyranny of itself was no aim of Mr. Churchill's to destroy. He did not even show much interest in the overthrow of Nazi tyranny itself when a prospect of achieving it was brought to his notice [with the help of the German resistance] …

Mr. Churchill's threat to extirpate Nazi tyranny [did not] convince the Germans that such tyranny was bad for them. On the contrary, they would regard it as so successful that Germany's foes were determined to destroy it."[1145]

And this is what Winston Churchill himself said in his memoirs, after the war had ended, about his own and his Allies' blind-rage objectives:

"My principal reason for opposing, as I always did, an alternative statement on peace terms, which was so often urged, was that a statement of the actual conditions on which the three great Allies would have insisted, and would have been forced by public opinion to insist, would have been far more repulsive to any German peace movement than the general expression 'unconditional surrender.' I remember several attempts being made to draft peace conditions which would satisfy the wrath of the conquerors against Germany. They looked so terrible when set forth on paper, and so far exceeded what was in fact done, that their publication would only have stimulated German resistance. They had in fact only to be written out to be withdrawn."[1146]

It was from *England* that for the first time the annihilation of an entire people, in fact genocide against all Germans, was announced as a war object. At that time in Germany there was no program for a "final solution of the Jewish question" and no program "for the annihilation of the Polish people." Furthermore, no German spokesperson or Statesmen have ever put forward the destruction of Britain or any other nation as a war aim, or even hinted that this would be their wish. For a state of affairs not directly affecting British interests, Great Britain declared war on Germany, demanded her annihilation and did everything possible for widening and brutalising the war.

Any historian, dealing with the background to the dividing-up of Germany after the war, would have to admit that the plans for the partition of Germany had been already "discussed in politics and in the media long before the diplomatic considerations attended to these plans." The resulting notions were supporting and recommending a "permanent weakening of German principal power in Central Europe."[1147] Mr. Eduard Benes, immediately after his resignation as President of Czecho-Slovakia in October 1938, went so far as to suggest that a minimum of 800,000 to 1 million Sudeten Germans, mainly the intellectual classes and the bourgeoisie, should be driven from their homeland.[1148]

Germany was no longer to be allowed to lay claims to any legal title of international law. In fact, she was an outcast, fair game for everyone. Churchill interpreted this goal thus:

> "By 'unconditional surrender' I mean that the Germans have no rights to any particular form of treatment. For instance, the Atlantic Charter would not apply to them as a matter of right.
>
> There will be, for instance, no question of the Atlantic Charter applying to Germany as a matter of right and barring territorial transferences or adjustments in enemy countries."[1149]

Three post-war media items from Britain are given as an example of how this policy from that time was smugly upheld and was still found praiseworthy up to the new German reunification in 1990:

Lord Beaverbrook's *Sunday Express* from 23 March 1958:

> "One has to remember that the last war was aimed at destroying Germany."[1150]

British historian A.J.P. Taylor, also in the *Sunday Express*, in October 1957:

> "The Germans certainly would not like the partition [of their country], but it is 'great' for all the others. Britain has waged two wars against Germany, triggered by different motives. Fundamentally it was always about the same: there are too many Germans and Germany is too strong. If one allows all Germans to unite, they will overshadow Europe. Now a solution is handed to us on a plate, for which we should be grateful; instead of that we declare that Germany must be reunified."[1151]

The same historian, A.J.P. Taylor, "who is one of the most violent German-haters,"[1152] gave in the spring of 1965 a series of lectures on BBC television, in the course of which he conducted "a general attack against lending any British support for the reunification of Germany" [1152] and stated:

> "The British people are not interested in reunifying Germany. On the contrary. The large majority is delighted about the happy chance that has divided Germany and has deprived her of all

her power... Wilson's [Prime Minister 1965 and Leader of the Labour Party] strongest supporters are also those most opposed to German reunification." [1152]

The United States of America

"Roosevelt and the 'New Deal' did a lot of good repair work, but they have not solved our problem any more than private industry has. We are ashamed to say, but the awful truth remains that our problem was solved temporarily only by the timely aid of the biggest of all evil: war. Does our faulty memory remember that at the outbreak of the Second World War the Depression had not gone? At that time our output had only reached the level of 1929, we still had eight million unemployed, our national income was, according to 1939 prices, still ten billion dollars less than it was in the year when the stock market crashed and the Depression started."[1153]

This is the sum total of experiences from the Roosevelt admirer and journalist William Shirer about the politics of Roosevelt's 'New Deal.' Proclaimed in 1933, these economic-political steering measures of the U.S. government were designed, but ultimately failed, to overcome the economic slump in the USA. President F.D. Roosevelt, however, managed to avert the domestic political crises threatening him with measures which are no credit to American democracy. The details of his war policy are no longer any secret; they can be read in any well-documented historical work. Here only a short summary can be given, demonstrating the basic outline of his foreign policy in the decisive years up to the outbreak of war.

It all seemed quite harmless in the beginning:

"Since 1933 he [Hitler] had been caustically criticized in the American press.

Some of the dispatches from American representatives in Berlin confirmed the dark suspicions of pessimistic American newspapers.

From 1933 to 1939 multitudes of Americans were being slowly conditioned for war along some foreign frontier...

As Hitler rearmed Germany ... large numbers of persons in this hemisphere began to feel that his bid for power was a menace to them as well as to his European neighbors."[1154]

As an example of what the "dispatches from American representatives in Berlin" looked like in those early days already, one only has to read the report of 21 April 1934 by the Acting Commercial Attaché, Douglas Miller, about the situation in Germany:

"The fundamental purpose of the Nazis is to secure a greater share of the world's future for the Germans, the expansion of German territory and growth of the German race until it constitutes the largest and most powerful nation in the world, and ultimately, according to some Nazi leaders, until it dominates the entire globe."[1155]

For the sake of historical truth it should be noted that such statements by "some NS-leaders" had never been made.

The press, but especially the financial circles, disapproved from the outset of Hitler's economic success, particularly since they could not surmount their own economic crisis. The point of contact between Hitler's success and the interests of the United States was the fact that 40% of Germany's foreign debt, approximately $1.8 billion, was based on American credits, which were raised during the time of the Weimar Republic, and repayment was to be made from now on according to guidelines that would not prevent the economic recovery of Germany. Hitler was determined to remove the financial and economic pressure from abroad, fully prepared and willing, however, to honour all German loans and commercial debts. The progress made, in comparison with the economic dependence of the Weimar Republic, is exemplified in a report published in the *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* about the Dawes Plan of 1924:

> "Nothing like the proposed procedure is to be found in history. Germany is to be taken over and administered in the same way as a corporation no longer able to meet its obligations is taken over by the law and transferred to the hands of the bankruptcy commissioners…
>
> In reality a foreign control of internal affairs has been imposed such as never before existed either in our times or in the past…
>
> Never before has it been proposed to take such complete possession of the wealth of a nation."[1156]

Up to that time, the issue of the vast reparations imposed on Germany by the Versailles dictate and concurrently the U.S. loan policy (cf. the "Dawes" and "Young" plans of 1924 and 1929 respectively) was contemplated in a very one-sided way with respect to the political and economic interests of the victors only. In June 1933, F.D. Roosevelt was still convinced that he could continue in the same way, thus radically disregarding, as had been done so far, the vital interests of Germany and of other European nations in favour of his own economic interests. He torpedoed the World Economic Conference, which assembled in London on 12 June 1933, with his refusal to re-establish the gold standard as a measure of international exchange value and declined to discuss the international monetary problems arising from the slump, the reparations policy and the new political situation in Germany. The questions which needed to be addressed all remained open: credit policy, price levels, limitation of currency fluctuations, exchange control, tariffs, quotas, subsidies and the resumption of foreign lending. Roosevelt laid the blame for the deplorable state of affairs, triggered by his

own handling of the situation, at the door of the alleged "aggressors"; the more evident this sorry situation was becoming, the more presumptuous and provoking his actions would become. In order to cripple the economy of these "aggressors," he immediately made bilateral agreements with the "peace-loving democracies," and on 31 January 1934, entirely on his own authority, he set a new par of exchange between the dollar and gold amounting to only 59.66% of the previous one. With this radical devaluation of the American currency, the foreign trade of other countries, but especially that of Germany, was reduced considerably. All in all, Roosevelt's boycott of the World Economic Conference resulted in the following:

a. As German exports became more difficult, this caused the inevitable striving for self-sufficiency.
b. The endeavours for reaching agreements among the European nations (the political accord of the Four Power Pact between Britain, France, Italy and Germany in July 1933; disarmament conferences, etc.) were largely hindered, or rather, were wrecked.
c. The "free press" of the United States was encouraged to intensify their antagonistic polemics.
d. The economic recovery of Germany, Italy and Japan, quite in contrast to the depressive stagnation of the economic situation in the USA, was not apt to change Roosevelt's attitude toward those countries. He was constantly searching for new pretexts to distract the attention of the American people from their own economic disturbances, which he proved unable to fix, by alarming the population with alleged political dangers from abroad.

It was no accident that the media in the United States had prepared the ground well, in the direction as indicated by Roosevelt, and this was attested to by foreign politicians and diplomats already before 1937. On 11 April 1935 Count Szembek, the former Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the Foreign Office in Warsaw, noted in his diary a conversation with the American Ambassador, Bullitt:

> "(At the end of my talk with Bullitt) I expressed the opinion that at the present time we were witnessing a worldwide aggressive policy aimed at Hitler, rather more so than any aggressive action on Germany's part."[1157]

Already on 4 April 1935 Count Szembek had realised

> "that all the rumours, which are circulating about the war, always originate from the same source, that is to say, from Jewish circles and from Freemason circles, and they are spread by the Second [II] and Third [III] International [left-wing Socialist movement]." [1157]

In the previous month, on 18 March 1935, the same Count Szembek had recorded a comment made by the American Ambassador in Warsaw, Cudahy, in his diary:

> "The Jews and German intellectuals who have taken refuge there [USA] are swaying American public opinion in a direction that is not favourable to Hitler Germany."[1158]

Regardless of some possibly justified charges of individual emigrants, it is difficult to clear the American government of the suspicion of having encouraged the lies disseminated by their press. It was Roosevelt himself who was spurring on the press toward inflaming the American people.

Since the quarantine speech of 5 October 1937 in Chicago, in which Roosevelt recommended that the "aggressors" – of course, only the Germans, Italians and Japanese – be put in quarantine and that "the reign of terror and international lawlessness" – a clear reference to the countries mentioned – should be fought, the U.S. President's policy of war was becoming increasingly evident.

> "It was really big talk in a high key. He was far more worried about party reverses at home than about Japanese movements in Manchuria. An economic recession in the United States had made it clear that the ballyhoo of New Deal politicians had struck some very sour notes that greatly annoyed the ears of American workers who were out of jobs. The Morgenthau Diaries give indisputable proof of the deep concern the Administration felt over the wide break in the economic structure of the nation. […]
>
> The quarantine speech of October 5 had many macabre overtones designed to frighten the American people. It indicated that large portions of the world were experiencing a 'reign of terror,' and that the 'landmarks and traditions which have marked the progress of civilization toward a condition of law, order and justice' were being 'wiped away.' 'Innocent peoples and nations' were being 'cruelly sacrificed to a greed for power and supremacy' which was 'devoid of all sense of justice and humane consideration.' If this sad condition of affairs existed in other parts of the world, it was vain for anyone to 'imagine that America will escape, that it may expect mercy, that this Western Hemisphere will not be attacked, and that it will continue tranquilly and peacefully to carry on the ethics and the arts of civilization.'"[1159]

Here then we already have those inflammatory phrases meant usually to smooth the way to war. The American press, although differing in their reaction to the request for "collective pressure," was nevertheless united in acknowledging that President F.D. Roosevelt had given his first crusader speech that would long be remembered. Leading authorities with expert knowledge of Roosevelt and collaborators of Roosevelt describe this quarantine speech a "milestone in the foreign policy of the United States."[1160] This "first drum roll in the democratic orchestra"[1161] was

produced at a time when no territorial readjustment had been demanded by Germany, and further, when no European country felt threatened by Germany. While the German economy was recovering impressively in spite all the boycotts levelled against her, Roosevelt and his advisers were deeply concerned about the economic recession and unemployment at home, having come to realise that they "were at the end of their improvisation."[1162]

In January 1938 Roosevelt intimated that in order to solve the economic crisis he wanted to concentrate government expenditure policy on the building of battleships.[1163]

In a special message from 28 January 1938, Roosevelt recommended to Congress the strengthening of the national defences in view of the armament of other nations increasing "at an unprecedented and alarming rate."

> "The President said that 'adequate defense' meant that, for the protection not only of our coast but also of our communities far removed from the coast, we must keep any potential enemy many hundreds of miles away from our continental limits. We could not assume, he stated, that our defense would be limited to one ocean and one coast and that the others would certainly be safe."[1164]

At the beginning of February 1938, Roosevelt wrote, in a private letter to the influential British politician Lord Elibank, that he was working with heart and soul toward

> "training the American public to join the crusade against Hitler."[1165]

The reunification of Austria with the Reich on 11 March 1938, having been noted by Secretary of State, Hull, without expressing concern and without "any critical or even disapproving attitude," was seen a few days later – possibly because "the President himself had 'intervened personally,'" in the opinion of the German Ambassador in the USA, Dieckhoff – as a "breach of treaty, as militarism, as rape."[1166] The unwarranted Czech mobilisation of 20 May 1938 – and in its wake the Sudeten crisis – was aggravated by Roosevelt at the end of June 1938 with his public announcement to withdraw the reinforced U.S.-fleet from the Pacific in order to concentrate it in the Atlantic.

> "This was plain enough and was also understood in London as a further call to make ready for war."[1167]

In August 1938, Roosevelt gave a speech in Canada, agitating again:

> "The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by, if domination of Canadian

soil is threatened by any other Empire."[1168]

As he had already divided the world into "peace loving democracies" and "totalitarian states," it thus meant that the dangers of aggressive action threatening the American continent, repeatedly suggested to the American subconscious in those terms, could only refer to Germany and Japan.

At the beginning of September 1938, President Roosevelt had his London Ambassador Kennedy inform the British Prime Minister that, whatever course Chamberlain would adopt, the United States would think right. [1168] Kennedy assured the British Foreign Secretary that – in the event that Great Britain was drawn into a European war –

> "the history of the last war would be repeated, leading a good deal more rapidly than in the last war to American intervention…
>
> This amounted to a far-reaching blank check, and Chamberlain undoubtedly had it in mind during the Munich crisis. I [Tansill] was able to discover in the State Department archives, however, no evidence of any real pressure upon the Prime Minister in favour of peace at any price."[1169]

The reasons for Roosevelt's antipathy toward Germany can hardly be explained with the "Jewish question," given that the influential circles in the USA were fully aware that the treatment of the Jews in Poland was considerably worse than in Germany. The protests against Poland's anti-Jewish measures, which up to the outbreak of war had been addressed to Congress in Washington, far exceeded the complaints made about anti-Jewish measures against the Reich, when expressed in figures and regards content.[1170] It is equally unlikely that Roosevelt's underlying reasoning was based on ethical or ideological motives, considering that he had tried already early on to join forces with Stalin, who governed in a far more tyrannical way than Hitler ever did, had not been elected by the peoples of the Soviet Union, and was actually demanding "to get rid of all religions and democracies," whereas Roosevelt accused National Socialism, altogether unjustly, of pursuing precisely this goal.[1171]

Just as, for example, a conference of Pan-American states debating the ceding to the USA of a frontier zone in Mexico would be of absolutely no concern to Germany, so, by the same token, the Munich conference had nothing whatsoever to do with the United States of America. Regardless of this fact, the U.S. President interfered in the affairs of another, far distant, continent. Roosevelt, who in September 1938, having a bad cold, already "wanted to kill Hitler and amputate the nose,"[1172] and who then – perhaps

the better to manage this? – appealed to Hitler to agree to an international conference in some neutral spot, but with no involvement by the USA, [1172] had, after the Munich conference,

> "... deep misgivings as to Chamberlain's appeasement policy and its implications. He told... darkly that he suspected Britain and France might offer Trinidad and Martinique to Hitler to keep him satisfied – and if they did he would send the fleet to take both islands." [1172]

In order to lend some real weight to this agitation for war, Roosevelt sent his Ambassador Bullitt to Europe with instructions concerning this matter and giving him extensive power. At the same time he had his close friend and adviser, Bernard M. Baruch, return to Washington from Europe, and through him "informed" the press on a "real and direct German threat to South America," a theme that was immediately taken up by Churchill for his own agitation.[1173] Bullitt, on the other hand, declared to the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Jerzy Potocki, on 19 November 1938:

> "It would be in accordance with the wishes of the democratic States that an armed conflict in the East should break out between the Reich and Russia.
>
> When I asked whether the United States would participate in a war of this kind, he [Bullitt] replied: 'Without the slightest doubt, but only if Britain and France make the first move!' Feelings in the United States, so he told me, were running so high against Nazism and Hitlerism that already to-day a psychosis was observable amongst Americans, similar to that which prevailed just before America declared war on Germany in 1917...
>
> Mr. Bullitt then mentioned the question of the Ukraine and Germany's intentions there. He confirmed that Germany had a complete staff of Ukrainian officials who were to take over the future government of the Ukraine and found an independent Ukrainian State under German influence. 'A Ukraine of this type,' Mr. Bullitt continued, 'would, of course, be very dangerous for you as it would directly influence the Ukrainians in Eastern Poland'…"[1174]

Even Potocki appeared to have been rather surprised by these remarks, for he ended his report to Warsaw with the words:

> "Mr. Bullitt was not too well-informed about the situation in Eastern Europe, and this part of his conversation was somewhat superficial." [1174]

A similar kind of bolstering to fight with Germany could be read in the note written by the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt. Burckhardt reported to the General Secretary of the League of Nations, Avenol, on 2 December 1938, on a talk with the American Ambassador in Warsaw, Biddle:

> "He – Biddle – was telling me with a strange satisfaction that the Poles were ready to go to war over Danzig. They would meet the motorised power of the German army with their manoeuvrability. 'In April,' he declared, 'there will be a new crisis; not since the Lusitania was torpedoed has there been in America such religious hatred against Germany as there is today! Chamberlain and Daladier will be swept away by public opinion. This is a holy War.'"[1175]

> "Already on 1 December the former Acting U.S. Secretary of War announced at an American military convention that 10,000 factories had received their 'final war production program'; a similar announcement was made on the same day in the House of Commons in Britain with regards to British industry."[1176]

On 14 November 1938, the American Ambassador in Berlin, Hugh Wilson, was called back to Washington by Roosevelt to make a report and for discussions. Wilson did not return to his post, so that Roosevelt's step was practically tantamount to breaking off diplomatic relations with Germany.

On 6 December 1938, Roosevelt openly showed his disapproval to the recently signed German-French Peace and Friendship Pact.[1177] He was thus in good company with Stalin, whose ideological motives, as part of his policy, were to undermine peace and friendship among other nations. On 4 January 1939 – two and a half months before Hitler's entry into Prague! – Roosevelt requested of Congress a revision of the neutrality legislation, approval for almost 1.3 billion dollars for armaments,[1178] and he made a provocative and insulting threat to Germany.[1179]

His reasoning:

> "All about us rage undeclared wars – military and economic. All about us are threats of new aggression – military and economic. There comes a time in the affairs of men when they must prepare to defend, not their homes alone but the tenets of faith and humanity on which their churches, their governments and their very civilization are founded. The defense of religion, of democracy and of good faith among nations is all the same fight. To save one we must now make up our minds to save all...
>
> God-fearing democracies could not forever let pass, without effective protest, acts of aggression. There are many methods short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the aggregate sentiments of our own people." [1179]

With his statement, "our [American] frontier... is on the Rhine," he positioned some more marker flags.[1180]

> "Nevertheless, whether or not Roosevelt actually made the statement, he most certainly did believe that America's eastern frontier was on the Rhine and it was on this belief that he acted."[1181]

This statement was merely repeating the ideas expressed to Congress on 28 January 1938, which he was to formulate anew at the beginning of February 1939 in the following words:

> "In the event of war, the frontier of the United States would be in France."[1182]

The U.S. Ambassador extraordinary, Bullitt, while denying that Roosevelt had stated that America's frontier lay on the Rhine, did declare,

however,

> "that the President had most certainly said that he was sending aeroplanes to France, for the French army was the first defence line of the United States."[1183]

In the same report of the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Lukasiewicz, from February 1939, the view of Roosevelt is expressed,

> "that the recent successes of the Rome-Berlin axis [February 1939!], which undermine both the prestige and the authority of France and Britain as imperial powers, threaten almost directly the real interests of the United States." [1183]

There is talk not only of the "immensely important means of coercion" directed toward Britain, which would "cause Britain to withdraw from any policy of compromise at France's expense," but also of equally effective means of coercion, principally of an economic nature, with regards to Germany and Italy, "which could be used without any internal political resistance." This feasible pressure being considered

> "could in great measure prevent the outbreak of an armed conflict or avoid the development of the European situation in a direction which would be undesirable from the point of view of Washington." [1183]

The first part of this sentence must have been written purely to put it on file, since "the development of the situation in Europe" was to run, in accordance with the wishes of the U.S. President, in the direction that

> "an armed conflict in the East should break out between the Reich and Russia." [1174]

The watchword of the U.S. government already declared that the American frontier has to be "on the Rhine,"[1184] the British frontier on the Vistula.[1185] It is not surprising, therefore, that the Polish government, by mid-January 1939, "possibly also influenced by United States diplomacy, had finally decided to refuse the Reich government" and, as of then, liked to portray "any entering into the Danzig and motor-road proposals as being equivalent to Poland losing her independence and accepting a satellite role."[1186] When looking back in December 1945, the U.S. Ambassador in London, Kennedy, stated:

> "neither the French nor the British would have made Poland a cause of war, if it had not been for the constant needling from Washington...."[1187]

The reports of 12 and 16 January 1939 by the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Potocki, describe the contents of the talks with leading American politicians and diplomats.[1188]

The following five characteristic features, tracing the unfolding events, are mentioned:

a. Enlivening of the Foreign Policy by F.D. Roosevelt.
b. Fierce and unequivocal condemnation of the "totalitarian" states, which is certainly to mean only Germany, Italy and Japan, not, however, the Soviet Union, Poland, Spain, Portugal, China or any other country.
c. Rapid and extensive war preparations.
d. Pressure on France and Britain – also by referring to the armament statistics of the United States – to oppose any compromise policy from the "totalitarian states" and to reject any discussions that had as its object any territorial changes.
e. Abandoning the isolationist policy by giving the assurance that, in the event of war, the USA would actively intervene on the side of France and Britain.

On 12 January 1939, Potocki explained in detail:

"Public opinion in America nowadays expresses itself in an increasing hatred of everything Fascist... Above all, propaganda here is entirely in Jewish hands. Jews own practically 100% of the broadcasting stations, cinemas, press organs and periodicals...

The whole situation in this country constitutes an excellent forum for all classes of public speakers and for refugees from Germany and Czecho-Slovakia who are not backward in inflaming American public opinion with a torrent of anti-German abuse and vilification...

It is interesting to observe that in this carefully thought-out campaign – which is primarily conducted against National Socialism – no reference at all is made to Soviet Russia. If that country is mentioned, it is referred to in a friendly manner, and people are given the impression that Soviet Russia is part of the democratic group of countries...

Side by side with this propaganda an artificial war panic is also created. Americans are induced to believe that peace in Europe is hanging by a thread and that war is inevitable. No effort is spared to impress upon the American mind that, in the event of a world war, the USA must take an active part in a struggle for freedom and democracy...

The modus operandi was perfectly simple. All Roosevelt had to do was to stage correctly, on the one hand, the menace of a world war brought about by Chancellor Hitler, while on the other hand, a bogey had to be found that would gabble about an attack on the USA by the totalitarian countries. The Munich Pact was indeed a godsend to President Roosevelt. He lost no opportunity in translating it as France's and England's capitulation to bellicose German militarism...

Furthermore, the brutal treatment meted out to the Jews in Germany as well as the problem of the refugees are both factors which intensify the existing hatred of everything connected with German National Socialism. In this campaign of hatred, individual Jewish intellectuals... and other well-known personal friends of Roosevelt have taken a prominent part. All of them want the President to become the protagonist of human liberty, religious freedom and the right of free speech. They want the President to punish all anti-Semitic agitation. This particular group of people, who are all in highly-placed American official positions and who are desirous of being representatives of 'true Americanism,' and as 'Champions of Democracy' are, in point of fact, linked with international Jewry by ties incapable of being torn asunder. For international Jewry – so intimately concerned with the interests of its own race – President Roosevelt's 'ideal' role as a

champion of human rights was indeed a godsend. In this way Jewry was able not only to establish a dangerous centre in the New World for the dissemination of hatred and enmity, but it also succeeded in dividing the world into two warlike camps. The whole problem is being tackled in a most mysterious manner. Roosevelt has been given the power to enable him to enliven American foreign policy and at the same time to create huge reserves in armaments for a future war which the Jews are deliberately heading for. It is easy for American domestic policy to divert public opinion in this country from an increasing anti-Semitic feeling. This is done by talking of the necessity for defending faith and individual liberty against the menace of Fascism."[1189]

The former League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt – an observer and expert without any pro-German leanings – commented on this document thus:

"This text could have come from a former German diplomat, [who would not have been, however, so well informed]."[1190]

It has to be taken for granted that Mr. Burckhardt had cogent reasons for publicising such a comment in 1960, since he would well remember, for example, a piece of advice from the president of the Jewish World Congress, Nahum Goldmann, during the pre-war period:

"Your appeasement manoeuvres in Danzig are harmful. Public protests against conditions in Danzig are essential, because of the general situation of the Jewish people as a whole."[1191]

After all, this suggestion was aiming at intensifying the long-standing disputes in Danzig that were stirred up by similar interest groups.

In February 1939, Ambassador Bullitt declared to his Polish colleague in Paris, Lukasiewicz, that

"the... point of view of official Washington circles lacks all idealism and results entirely from the necessity of defending the real interests of the United States…

As far as Britain is concerned, the United States control various and immensely important means of coercion. The mere threat to make use of them would suffice to cause Britain to withdraw from any policy of compromise."[1192]

All of these pieces of data are from an era before the German entry into Prague. Consequently, the motive for this stance could not be attributed to the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia!

After Hitler had occupied Bohemia-Moravia and Mussolini had occupied Albania, Roosevelt sent a threatening letter to Chamberlain to the effect that America would no longer support "the democracies," if they were to keep to the Munich agreements (by this was meant the Peace and Friendship Declarations with Germany).[1193]

On 19 March 1939, Lukasiewicz and Bullitt assured the Polish Foreign Minister that President Roosevelt would do everything possible to go into action against Germany.

> "Bullitt informed the Poles that he knew Germany hoped to acquire Danzig, and that he was counting on Polish willingness to go to war over the Danzig question. He urged Lukasiewicz to present demands to the West for supplies and other military assistance."[1194]

The Ambassador-Extraordinary of the American President continued to set up diplomatic war preparations in Paris and London. On 26 March 1939, he urged his colleague in London, Kennedy, to inform Chamberlain that the United States hoped

> "that Great Britain would go to war with Germany, if the Danzig dispute produced an explosion between Germany and Poland."[1195]

How the USA, at the time still doubtful about the British leadership's determination for war, had thought to lend weight to their "suggestions" to London, is revealed in the secret talks between Bullitt and Lukasiewicz, which were being held at the same time. Bullitt assured his Polish colleague in Paris

> "that the United States would be able to exert sufficient pressure to produce a British mobilization at the peak of the next crisis."[1196]

President Roosevelt, who was aware of the intended British guarantee of 31 March 1939, had told his Ambassador Kennedy in London that he thought "the statement excellent" and that "it would have a very great effect."

> "The United States, he thought [Ambassador Kennedy to Halifax], would consider that war was imminent, but the President [Roosevelt] did not think that this would do any harm."[1197]

Roosevelt raised the panic barometer in his country with his many speeches, using them also to keep "war at the centre of all the deliberations" (speeches in Warm Springs on 8 and 9 April, on 14 April in Washington to the Governing Board of the Pan-American Union). The secret alarming news sent from Paris by Bullitt and the French Foreign Minister, Bonnet, according to which "there might be war at any moment,"[1198] were not designed to produce a reassuring effect. While Roosevelt declared yet on 14 April that "there is no such thing as encircling... any peaceful nation by other peaceful nations," he nonetheless compared the Germans and Italians to the Huns and Vandals and, apart from anything else, this made it perfectly clear to what degree he himself was active as the one who was forging this encircling ring. Then later, at the Yalta conference on 8 February 1945, Stalin would raise his glass in a toast to Roosevelt and would describe him, "even though his own country had not been directly

threatened," as "the foremost maker of the tools with which the worldwide mobilisation against Hitler was mounted."[1199]

Roosevelt's intentions became even more obvious when, directly after his speech on 14 April 1939, he made an appeal to Hitler and Mussolini, in which he suggested that Hitler and Mussolini should give assurances of non-intervention for ten years with regards to thirty-one countries, amongst which were even two countries in the Near East under foreign mandate. The United States would take part in any negotiations resulting from this. None of the countries mentioned had, up to that date, ever complained to Roosevelt about being threatened by Germany.

> "The President's denunciation of the dictators as modern 'Huns and Vandals' was bound to evoke a bitter reply. In order to raise the pitch of their anger and make their replies so extreme in language that the American public would become increasingly war-minded, the President held a press conference on April 15 [1939] and took advantage of his gifts as a showman to impress his audience with the manner in which he had verbally spanked Hitler and Mussolini."[1200]

The comment from Bullitt of 11 April 1939 that "France would refuse to join Britain in taking action to resist Germany if the British Mediterranean Fleet" – according to "a previous promise made to Australia" – "was sent to Singapore," induced Roosevelt, on 15 April 1939, to order the American fleet "into the Pacific."[1201] The British Major-General and military historian, J.F.C. Fuller, revealed further facts from the sphere of the U.S. secret diplomacy:

> "Weigand, the doyen of American journalists in Europe, informs us that, on April 25, 1939, he was called to the American Embassy in Paris and told by Bullitt: 'War in Europe has been decided upon. America,' he predicted, 'would be in the war after Britain and France entered it.'
>
> The statement is corroborated by the White House Papers of Harry Hopkins, in which their editor says that, about this time, Winston Churchill told Bernard Baruch: 'War is coming very soon. We will be in it and you (the United States) will be in it. You (Baruch) will be running the show over there, but I will be on the sidelines over here.'"[1202]

The so-called "cash and carry" clause (Section 2 of the Neutrality Act of 1937) had expired on May 1, 1939. Since that date the United States of America was delivering to Britain and France, completely unobstructed, "all raw materials of military importance" and armament goods.[1203] A further decisive step was taken.

On 23 May 1939, the Japanese Prime Minister, Baron Hiranuma, at a secret conference with the adviser for the American Embassy, Eugene H. Doomann, suggested that:

> "…he might sound out Germany and Italy, if Mr. Roosevelt was prepared to approach Britain and France, in order to hold a conference to try to solve the troubles of Europe. Mr. Hull viewed

this approach as ‘amazing,’ and brought it to Mr. Roosevelt’s personal attention. But a reply was delayed for the better part of three months, by which time circumstances had changed, and a great opportunity which had been neglected was wasted – or evaded.

American preparations for war were proceeding silently and secretly. On June 23, 1939, a secret barter agreement was made with Britain, ‘a good deal of money’ was spent to buy various war materials; nineteen new merchant ships were launched by August 9; contracts were about to be let for one hundred more; and on August 10 a War Resources Board was created.”[1204]

Irrespective of any particular decisions and measures, the propaganda machine continued pointing the way to war.

“Regardless of whatever it was that any Axis power was keeping in South America, be it in the form of their embassies, firms, airlines, trade and military missions, associations, newspapers, publicity agencies – every particular that could be found was considered a sign of an impending ‘aggression,’ especially by Hull, who, by referring to such indications, persuaded the Pan-American conference in Lima to make a demonstrative ‘declaration of solidarity of the two Americas.’”[1205]

In the summer of 1939, F.D. Roosevelt was urging Chamberlain and Daladier to make promises to Poland, regardless of whether these could be fulfilled or not, which found their classical expression in these words, repeatedly told to Kennedy in London, “to put some iron up Chamberlain’s backside.”[1206] At the same time, Roosevelt was doing everything to persuade Congress to amend the Neutrality Act.

On 28 May 1939, Roosevelt had a conversation with the Czech ex-President Benes at Hyde Park, north of New York. This was recorded by Benes in his memoirs:

“I think the United States will also have to enter the war in any case. Europe alone cannot win the war against Hitler. And even if the United States does not enter the fight against Nazism, Nazism will attack the United States. It is necessary not to forget that in Hitler and his companions, the rest of the world is up against real madmen who are out of their minds and capable of anything.”[1207]

On 6 July 1939, the Undersecretary of State in the Polish Foreign Ministry, Count Szembek, summarised the impressions of the Polish Ambassador, Count Jerzy Potocki, who had returned from Washington:

“He was dumbfounded, when noticing the atmosphere prevalent in Poland. In comparison with the war panic which has invaded the West, one gets the impression that living in our country is like living in a rest-home.

In the West, there are all kinds of elements openly pushing for war: the Jews, the big capitalists and the arms merchants. All are presented these days with an excellent opportunity: they have found a tinder spot: Danzig, and a nation that wants to fight: Poland. They want to do business at our expense. The destruction of our country would leave them cold. But no: as everything would need to be rebuilt later, they would be the ones who would gain.”[1208]

The former American Secretary of War, James Forrestal, wrote in his diary:

"... if it had not been for Bullitt's urging on Roosevelt in the summer of 1939 that the Germans must be faced down about Poland; neither the French nor the British would have made Poland a cause of war, if it had not been for the constant needling from Washington."[1209]

On 4 August 1939, Roosevelt intervened directly in the negotiations between the Western Military and the Soviets; just in those negotiations, where the outcome, as every politician was bound to realise, would have to result in either war or peace. Roosevelt indicated to Umansky, the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, who was about to return to Moscow, that the USA saw the European situation in the same way as Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union. That is why the USA was in favour of these three states concluding a military alliance in everybody's interest. A victory of the Axis Powers in a war in Europe or the Far East would affect the position of the United States as much as it would affect that of the Soviet Union. Roosevelt subsequently had these notions also conveyed in a secret dispatch to Moscow.[1210]

President Roosevelt even rejected Chamberlain's more or less non-committal pleading for mediation and arbitration:

"On 23 August 1939, Sir Horace Wilson, acting on Chamberlain's behalf, saw Kennedy, the American Ambassador. After the conversation, Kennedy telephoned the State Department: 'The British wanted one thing of us and one thing only, namely that we put pressure on the Poles. They felt that they could not, given their obligations, do anything of this sort but that we could.' President Roosevelt rejected this idea out of hand."[1211]

On 24 August the German Chargé d'Affaires in Washington stated that the American press was doing everything in their power

"to establish Germany's war guilt unmistakably beforehand, and thereby to propagate the idea of intervention still more strongly among the people."[1212]

On 26 August 1939, the British Ambassador in Washington, Lindsay, reported on a conversation with Roosevelt, according to which the American President "was delighted at the prospect of a new World War."[1213]

"Roosevelt also promised Lindsay that he would delay German ships under false pretenses in a feigned search for arms, so that they could be easily seized by the British under circumstances which would be arranged with exactitude between the American and British authorities. The British Ambassador was personally perturbed that the President of one of the important countries could be gay and joyful about a tragedy which seemed so destructive of the hopes of all mankind. He reported that Roosevelt 'spoke in a tone of almost impish glee, and though I may be wrong, the whole business gave me the impression of resembling a school-boy prank.'"[1213+1214]

Roosevelt never did show any consideration or understanding toward either Germany or Japan, although both countries wanted to avoid a conflict with the USA. He rejected every compromise in the European and Asian

spheres, that is to say, in those areas which were really of no concern to him! Trying to wreck any peace proposals being considered by other statesmen, he was pressing for further alliance treaties, military pacts and pledges of assistance against Germany. Furthermore, this was already done some years before the war started, in a fashion that was going too far even for British government circles.[1215]

There is scarcely any historian who would dispute that since 1937/1938 Roosevelt, by way of his public addresses, his secret diplomacy, his pushing, and by exerting his influence on the economy of other nations, had been decisively directing primarily Great Britain, France and Poland from afar and had been putting pressure on them. Roosevelt bears a crucially large share of the responsibility for the outbreak, for the widening and spreading, and for the brutalisation of the Second World War.[1216]

Here are a few examples of Roosevelt's measures from the beginning of the European war, recorded chronologically in numerous works:

President Roosevelt rejected all German proposals for mediation:

a) "As is known, Hitler already ended the September 1939 Poland campaign with an offer of peace, which he announced at the Reichstag sitting of 6 October 1939. I remember this time all the more clearly, as my former chief, Dr. Dietrich, had, before this Reichstag session, sent for the Berlin correspondents of the American newspapers, acquainted them with the main considerations of the Hitler speech and, almost pleadingly, asked them to remember in particular: 'This is the hour of President Roosevelt.'

Of course Dietrich did not realise then, just how futile such an appeal was bound to be, as the secret documents on Roosevelt's meddling in the preliminaries of war were as yet unknown. All the same, the Dietrich action was generally noticed, undoubtedly because it was done with Hitler's approval. This 'feeler' did reach the White House, was even referred to at the President's press conference – but dismissed by the President with a slight wave of the hand."[1217]

b) On 3 October 1939, Hermann Göring remarked to the American negotiator, W.R. Davis:

"You can assure Mr. Roosevelt that, if he will undertake mediation, Germany will agree to an adjustment whereby a new Polish State and a new Czecho-Slovakian independent government would come into being. I agree that the conference should be in Washington."[1218]

Neither Davis – who, after Roosevelt had refused him a personal discussion on his return, wrote a long letter to the President detailing his conferences in Berlin – nor the Reich government ever received an answer.

c) Göring renewed the offer in mid-October 1939, and again at the beginning of 1940, when he had a discussion with the president of the

‘General Motors Overseas Corporation,’ J.D. Mooney, and he concluded it by indicating a possible reshuffle of the Reich government.

d) The overtures made by the former president of the Reichsbank, Hjalmar Schacht, were also rejected.[1219]

e) The contacts established by the Reich Press Chief, Dr. Dietrich, with the Foreign correspondent and Chief of the Berlin office of the ‘Associated Press,’ L.P. Lochner, remained equally unproductive, as was Roosevelt’s intent.

Roosevelt justified his refusal of mediation with these words:

> “He could not come to the fore as mediator without the consent of the two Western Powers.” [1219]

Roosevelt, knowing about the secret agreements, was evidently doubtful from the start about the desire for peace on the part of Britain and France; no indications were forthcoming from London or Paris to be sounding out chances for peace. The realisation of their war aims, namely the annihilation of Germany and the plan of a world government of the “Four Policemen” (USA, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China) for the post-war period,[1220] mattered more to him than a reasonable program for world peace.

On 10 January 1941, Roosevelt had sent his trusted adviser, Harry Hopkins, on a secret mission to London. On arrival at No. 10 Downing Street, Hopkins informed the British War Premier, Winston Churchill, “with gleaming eye and quiet constrained passion”:

> “The President is determined that we shall win the war together. Make no mistake about it.
> He has sent me here to tell you that at all costs and by all means he will carry you through, no matter what happens to him – there is nothing that he will not do so far as he has human power.”[1221]

On 15 March 1941, President Roosevelt described his decision for war in an address, which was broadcast by radio throughout the world:

> “We know that, although Prussian autocracy was bad enough, Nazism is far worse.
> Nazi forces are not seeking mere modifications in colonial maps or in minor European boundaries. They openly seek the destruction of all elective systems of government on every continent – including our own; they seek to establish systems of government based on the regimentation of all human beings by a handful of individual rulers who have seized power by force…
> These modern tyrants find it necessary to their plans to eliminate all democracies – eliminate them one by one. The nations of Europe, and indeed we ourselves, did not appreciate that purpose. We do now…

This decision is the end of any attempts at appeasement in our land; the end of urging as to get along with the dictators; the end of compromise with tyranny and the forces of oppression…

The world has no use for any nation which, because of size or because of military might, asserts the right to goose-step to world power over other nations or other races…"[1222]

"In effect, the President has declared war already. He has identified the enemy and speaks of victory."[1223]

During the conferences on the Atlantic Charter on 14 August 1941 – four months before the USA entered the war – Roosevelt again stated his preferences for fighting actions without a declaration of war by revealing to Churchill:

"I may never declare war; I may make war. If I were to ask Congress to declare war, they might argue about it for three months."[1224]

Roosevelt had the Atlantic Charter – that is to say the proclamation of the alleged war aims – so formulated, already long before the USA entered the war, that on the basis of his power he presented all other nations with an option: Those on the side of freedom, democracy and peace – thus in favour of the Atlantic Charter – must follow the Anglo-American policy and fight for the destruction of "Nazism," that is to say they must support the fight by giving all necessary assistance. Thus, Roosevelt could tell Congress on 23 August:

"The declaration of principles is so clear cut that it is difficult to oppose in any major particular without automatically admitting a willingness to accept compromise with Nazism."[1225]

The "Big Three" – the Soviet government had also signed the Atlantic Charter on 24 September 1941 – were in agreement from the beginning

"that in the practical application of the Atlantic Charter it is unavoidable that the circumstances, necessities and historical characteristics of one or other country will have to be taken into account,"[1226]

and that, thanks to this proviso, none of the signatory states needed to abide by the postulates of this declaration of war aims – which subsequently none of them did.

On 1 September 1941, the American "Labor Day," Roosevelt announced:

"We are engaged on a grim and perilous task. Forces of insane violence have been let loose by Hitler upon this earth. We must do our full part in conquering them...

I know that I speak the conscience and determination of the American people when I say that we shall do everything in our power to crush Hitler and his Nazi forces."[1227]

Roosevelt speaking to Congress on 6 January 1942:

"Japan's scheme of conquest goes back half a century. But the dreams of empire of the Japanese and Fascist leaders were modest in comparison with the gargantuan aspirations of Hitler and his Nazis. Even before they came to power in 1933, their plans for conquest had been drawn.

Those plans provided for ultimate domination, not of any one section of the world but of the whole earth and all the oceans on it. …

Destruction of the material and spiritual centers of civilization – this has been and still is the purpose of Hitler and his Italian and Japanese chessmen. They would wreck the power of the British Commonwealth and Russia and China and the Netherlands – and then combine all their forces to achieve their ultimate goal, the conquest of the United States. …

The world is too small to provide adequate 'living room' for both Hitler and God. In proof of that, the Nazis have now announced their plan for enforcing their new German, pagan religion throughout the world – the plan by which the Holy Bible and the Cross of Mercy would be displaced by Mein Kampf and the swastika and the naked sword." [1227]

After signing the Atlantic Charter, Churchill later told the British Parliament (27 January 1942),

"that the Atlantic Conference gave him increasing assurance that the U.S., 'even if not herself attacked,' would come to a war in the Far East, and that, if Japan were to run amok in the Pacific, 'we shall not fight alone.'"[1228]

Roosevelt cynically confirmed this, his foreign policy, in an address to the Foreign Policy Association on 21 October 1944:

"Obviously, we could have come to terms with Hitler and accepted a minor role in his totalitarian world. We rejected that! We could have compromised with Japan... And we rejected that."[1229]

Already during the Second World War, Sven Hedin, the renowned Swedish explorer and scientist, had written on the basis of and as a result of his historical research:

"This war will go down in history as the war of President Roosevelt."[1230]

At the time of writing this, Sven Hedin was not even informed about all of Roosevelt's measures. Almost the same words as those used by Sven Hedin were used at the same time by American Senator Nye, who in 1936 was directing the Nye Committee Investigation into the reasons for the USA entering the First World War (27 April 1941):

"The same powers that were making fools of us during the Great War are again making fools of us… If we are ever involved in this war, it will be called by future historians by only one name: 'the War of the President,' because every one of his steps since his speech in Chicago [of 5 October 1937] has been turned toward war."[1231]

American General Albert Wedemeyer, who, under the Army Chief of Staff and future Secretary of State, Marshall, was charged with drawing up the "Victory program" for the defeat of Hitler, added to this statement, after having examined Roosevelt's various war measures during the years 1940-1941, the following words:

"Thus we should have been openly involved in the war months before Pearl Harbor, had it not been for Hitler's evident determination not to be provoked by our belligerent acts into declaring war on us...

Roosevelt had carried Congress along with him in his un-neutral actions by conjuring up the bogey of an anticipated attack on America. We now know, thanks to the exhaustive examination of the German secret archives at the time of the Nuremberg trials, that there never was any plan of attack on the United States. On the contrary, the tons of documents examined prove that Hitler was all along intent on avoiding war with the United States. He did not declare war on us until compelled to do so by his alliance with Japan.

In the words of the eminent British military historian, Major General J.F.C. Fuller, writing in *A Military History of the Western World* (p. 629), in 1956:

> 'The second American crusade ended even more disastrously than the first, and this time the agent provocateur was not the German Kaiser but the American President, whose abhorrence of National Socialism and craving for power precipitated his people into the European conflict and so again made it world-wide. From the captured German archives there is no evidence to support the President's claims that Hitler contemplated an offensive against the Western Hemisphere, and until America entered the war, there is abundant evidence that this was the one thing he [Hitler] wished to avert.'

Extreme provocation having failed to induce Germany to make war on us, and there being no prospect of Congress declaring war because of the determination of the great majority of the American people not to become active belligerents, Roosevelt turned his eyes to the Pacific. It could be that Japan would show less restraint, since it was possible to exert diplomatic and economic pressures that would practically compel her to make war on us."[1232]

"Clare Boothe-Luce shocked many people when she said at the Republican Party Congress in 1944 that Roosevelt 'has lied us [the USA] into the war.' When, however, this statement proved to be true, the Roosevelt followers stopped denying it, and praised it by maintaining that 'he had to lie,' in order to save his country, and then Britain and 'the World.'"[1233]

Just what weight would the IMT tribunal in Nuremberg in 1945/1946 have attached to only a single one of these pieces of evidence, had one been able to ascribe similar quotations, guidelines and foreign political initiatives to the leaders of the NSDAP?

The Soviet Union

The ruthless fighting motto of the German Communist Party [KPD] "Beat the Fascists wherever you find them," applied in the field of domestic affairs, corresponded to the concept of foreign policy of the Soviet Union, which has also been orientated, from the outset, toward attacking and destroying the "Fascists." While the Communists professed, on the one hand, to recognise the fundamental principles of international law of the right of self-determination of nations, they considered themselves justified, on the other hand, in view of the drastic changes within the internal affairs of the Reich, to fall upon Germany with force of arms.

For the Communists, no binding system of law and order exists within the structure of international law. They will only call upon the constitution of the international law when it appears useful for tactical reasons. Then as

later during the Cold War, the foreign policy of the Soviet Union was governed by ideological principles which do not rest on the universally binding notions of right, international standards of law, or formal treaties made, but solely serve the final objective of world domination. Up to Gorbachev's *perestroika*, the basic principles of Lenin were followed:

> "Not one solitary Marxist can deny, without in general breaking with the principles of Marxism and Socialism, that the interests of Socialism rank higher than the right of self-determination of nations."[1234]
>
> "If war does not happen of its own accord, then we have to make it happen. If we are forced to put up with this pack of capitalistic, thieving riffraff, who are all busy sharpening their knives at us, then it is our clear duty to make them turn these knives on each other." [1234]
>
> "No power on earth can hold back the advance of the Communist world revolution toward the Soviet world republic." [1234]

As Germany was one of the corner stones in the Soviets' scheme of world revolution, but "Fascism" or, even worse, "Hitler-Fascism," stood in the way and, for this reason, had been declared enemy number one ("Fascism = the most terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic, the most imperialistic elements of capitalistic finance," so explains the Soviet encyclopaedia), it thus clearly establishes the orientation and intention of Soviet foreign policy during the years between 1933 and 1939-1941 with regard to the German Reich. Only military weakness prevented the Soviet Union at the time from attacking Germany. Since 1918 the Bolshevists have been pushing unceasingly, and with all available means at their disposal, toward the conquest of Germany – at a time, when Hitler was not even politically active yet and when Germany in her foreign politics and in the economic and military field was being kept in an impotent state by the Versailles dictate. Yet the Communists had not set their sights on this goal of world revolution in order to thwart a German invasion of Russia. Their planned world revolution was not, after all, directed against the "barbaric, marauding nations" or against nationalistic points of view, but it was orientated toward worldwide conquest – and, what is more, by every means of force.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Moscow's foreign policy course since 1918 had been set along the guidelines resulting from the demands of Marxism-Leninism – independent of the politics or the structure of German governments! The Bolshevists admit consistently and openly that this has always been their position throughout the years up to the collapse of the

Soviet Union. On 1 August 1931, Wilhelm Pieck, then a member of the Reichstag for the Communist Party who after the war was to become the first President of the German Democratic Republic ("DDR"), *i.e.*, of Communist East Germany, stated the following:

> "The Red Army in Soviet Russia is standing by to give military assistance to the Communist army in Germany, as soon as they are ready to put an end to the bourgeois state."[1235]

In 1932, Klara Zetkin, the Communist doyenne-president of the summer Reichstag,

> "had stated in her speech, to the accompaniment of heavy insults from the National Socialists, that she was speaking on Moscow's behalf, and that she could announce 'as of now' the assistance of the Red Army, should 'the working people of Germany' rise up for a war of liberation."[1236]

Every German politician was compelled to reach the obvious conclusion regarding the situation within the Weimar Republic, later described by Soviet historians to this effect:

> "During the transitional period of Fascism on the way to power, the German Communist Party (KPD) was the biggest and most powerful section of the Communist International from the capitalist countries. At the end of the year 1932 there were within its rank roughly 300,000 members…
>
> The German Communist Party called on the people to organise a mass uprising for the downfall of the Fascist regime."[1237]

On 22 January 1934, from the pen of Kaganovich, Stalin's brother-in-law, the following observation appeared in the Moscow newspaper *Izvestia*:

> "The conflict between Germany and France is strengthening our position in Europe. The disagreements among the European countries must be intensified."

In order to enlarge the differences between Germany and France and widen it into a conflict, the Soviet Union offered to the French her "well-equipped and well-trained Red Army in the case of a conflict with Germany."[1238]

The guiding principle had long been fixed by Stalin in 1925 or, rather, in 1927; it had just as little to do with the person of Adolf Hitler or his aims and ideas as it did with National Socialism as such, and it was moreover not even solely concerned with Germany.

On 19 January 1925, Stalin said to the Central Committee of the CPSU:

> "But when the war starts, we will not sit back and take it easy – we will have to fall in, but we go last. We will line up to bring the decisive weight to bear."[1239]

This strategy Stalin confirmed once more shortly before his death. [1239] Or, Stalin on another occasion:

> "We need to remember that Lenin had emphasised just how much depends upon delaying the unavoidable war with the capitalist countries, because the war must be put off until such time that either the revolution has entrenched itself in the colonies or, in the end, the capitalists are fighting each other… The basis for our relations with the capitalist countries lies in our affirming the peaceful co-existence between the two opposing systems."[1240]

Founded on these motives and adhering strictly to Lenin's teachings of strategy and tactics, the Soviet Union was trying to aggravate the disagreements between the European countries. Openly fanning the flames of hatred, they were also sowing the seeds of discord in the European nations by making use, as was their wont, of their dialectical phraseology. The Results: Agitation against national unification in Germany, against the "imperialistic annexations" (*i.e.* the reunification of the Rhineland, of Austria, the Sudetenland, Bohemia-Moravia, and the Memel area with the Reich), and it seemed irrelevant that the Bolsheviks had been, once upon a time, fiercely against the Versailles ruling.

> "Within the political context, the Second World War had already started on 30 January 1933."[1241]

This agitating pose was in the tactical interests of the Soviet Union, given that it opened the prospects of a military coalition against Germany with its subsequent own potentials for expansion. Routinely ascribing a willingness and readiness for war to other governments are integral parts of the Communist worldview and politics anyway. For this, facts are totally irrelevant. The Prague Marxist newspaper *Pravo Lidu* wrote on 18 September 1938, thus before the reunification of the Sudeten Germans with the Reich:

> "We may not be strong enough to defeat Germany, but we are strong enough to get all Europe embroiled in a war."[1242]

Here public expression is given to what is not only consistent with Communist ideology, but which had already been arranged in the Comintern a long time ago. Let us briefly note the previously cited Soviet admission:

> "Throughout the course of the pre-war years, the Soviet government was prepared to employ armed force against Germany."[1243]

Marshal Voroshilov also affirmed to his opposite number, the French General Doumenc, during the course of the British-French-Soviet military negotiations on 22 August 1939:

"When Czecho-Slovakia fell last year, we were waiting for a sign from France. Our troops were standing by, but no sign was given."[1244]

Therefore, the Soviets were admittedly eager to act aggressively and apply force of arms during the pre-war years. If one follows through the Communists' line of reasoning, then it would be first and foremost Great Britain, France and the United States incurring an "historical guilt" by the fact that, until late 1938, they had pursued a "policy of non-interference" with regard to Hitler, instead of promptly following the Soviet policy of meddling and destruction. Nikita Khrushchev acknowledged in an interview in November 1958:

"In 1939 Stalin saw an opportunity to weaken Hitler, before the coming attack on Russia, in that he encouraged him to wage war in the West."[1245]

In July 1959, Khrushchev stated in Kattowitz:

"Was Stalin right when he concluded an agreement with Hitler at that time? Stalin decided to do so upon calculating that then war against the others would break out. He said to me at the time: 'We will have to make war against Hitler. He cannot only just fight the West. But we must gain time.' And so that is what happened."[1246]

The Soviet Union continued also later, in spite of having concluded treaties in the meantime (Non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939, Friendship Pact of 28 September 1939), to intensively pursue the goal of defeating National Socialism or, that is to say, Germany – yes, even entire Europe – at the first given opportunity – all for reasons of Communist "morals." These "morals" acknowledge only that which serves Marxism-Leninism or, rather, the world revolutionary Communist Party.

"The Non-Aggression Pact with Germany was designed to gain time and strengthen our defensive forces… Not Britain and France were the true fighting force. The true fighting force against the Fascist peril, the single-minded fighters from beginning to end, were the Communist parties. The Communists were fighting uncompromisingly against Fascism."[1247]

Stalin's agreement with Hitler did not render the world revolutionary objective invalid. Moscow's phraseology toward Germany since that time did lose some of its ferocity, it is true, but the dialectics remained unchanged, thereby awakening distrust. All signs indicated that Stalin had concluded this treaty merely in accordance with the spirit of Lenin's tactics, as was indeed openly admitted by Soviet historians after the war:

"The fundamental strategic tasks of the work force remained unchanged throughout the whole course of the Second World War. They involved the destruction of Fascism, but first and foremost in its Hitlerite expression, this being the biggest and most dangerous obstacle for the nations on the way to peace, to social progress, to Socialism.…

Although the strategic line of the Communist parties remained unchanged in the years of the Second World War, the tactical forms of the working class struggle were changed, depending on the then existing concrete historical circumstances of the various stages of the war...

The tactics for the Communist parties were laid down by the Central Committee of the Communist International. In October 1939 it issued a proclamation, branding as imperialistic the war on both sides of the then warring factions. The slogan of the proclamation was this:

'No support for the politics of the ruling classes.'

Already by the second half of September 1939 the Communist parties had begun to put into practice the new tactical line, which had been worked out by the Central Committee of the Comintern. ....

In connection with the invasion of France by the German-Fascist conquerors, the French Communists changed their tactical stance. At the end of May 1940 the Communist Party approved a declaration on the struggle against the foreign invaders and the national traitors…

The manifesto of the Communist Party of 10 July 1940 was the first invitation to begin launching into the anti-Hitler war. It laid the foundation for the resistance movement of the French nation. At the end of 1940, the Communists became the organisers of the first groups of fighting strength which began their fight in 1941. This was the period of gathering together the anti-Fascist patriotic forces.…

Everywhere the Communist parties were encouraging the patriotic movements to create an anti-Fascist united front and to embark upon offering resistance – and they were the organisers. In these countries (Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Greece and other countries), armed and highly trained units were set up to lead the fight against the foreign conquerors.

The military defeat of several European countries and their occupation by the Hitlerite troops was creating, in the spring of 1940, changed conditions for the Communist parties in the fight for uniting the work force against Fascism."[1248]

The USSR, when concluding the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939, "did not doubt for one moment Germany's intention to attack the Soviet Union,"[1249] so we are informed by Soviet historians.

"From the first moment on (after the conclusion of the Pact), war with Germany seemed inevitable in the coming weeks."[1250]

Anyone versed in Communist dialectical jargon must gather from these lines that not for one moment did Stalin take seriously the agreements with Hitler. Instead, they were for him – in accordance with the teachings of Lenin on strategy and tactics – merely means of deception, "tactical" measures in the service of his world revolution. Not at any time have these Soviet authors asserted that Moscow had endeavoured to keep these treaties. Stalin's arrangements with Great Britain and France, just prior to the outbreak of war, were based on the same objective. Stalin realised that he would achieve a result furthering the world revolution, if he could succeed in getting the European powers embroiled in a war. So he stated his intentions to the members of the Politburo at a secret meeting on 23 August 1939:

"I am convinced that Germany, if we continue our alliance with France and Britain, will find herself forced to draw back from Poland. This way war will be avoided. But events will then

assume a character which is threatening to us.

If, on the other hand, we accept the proposals made by Germany, British and French intervention will become inevitable. In any case we shall have to stay out of the conflict. Our interests demand it. We shall thus have to accept the German proposals and, with a polite refusal, send the British and French missions home.

It is important for us that this war should break out. We must intensify Communist efforts so as to be well prepared for the time when the conflict will come to its end."[1251]

The Soviet Ambassador in London, Maisky, confirmed this attitude, explaining in his memoirs that "the Soviet-German agreement of August 23, 1939, was, of course, not an act of perfection – and the Soviet government never regarded it as such."[1252] The fact alone that in Soviet writings it is emphasised, again and again, that, since concluding the agreement with Hitler, the USSR regarded war with Germany as "inevitable" (without, however, giving any reasons for this "inevitability") – while for the year 1941 the expedient argument was used that Stalin had been "taken by surprise" and was not expecting a German attack – demonstrates unambiguously that Stalin's intention, being focused on attack, had caused this "inevitability of war."

If it was a case of Stalin concluding the Non-Aggression Pact with the aim to trigger a European war using Hitler – and Khrushchev later confirmed that this was Stalin's intention[1253] – then the next step along this path could only have been so calculated as to await the most favourable opportunity for defeating "Fascism" and thereby to conquer the entire European continent. Although the *Blitzkriege* (lightning wars) of the German Wehrmacht in Poland, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium and France were a surprise for Moscow, a German excursion into the British Isles would have bound to expose the frontier with the Soviet Union once more and to such a degree that it would guarantee an unstoppable Soviet advance on the continent. The German leadership had ample proof to hand months before the start of the Russian campaign that the Soviets were, in fact, intending to utilise such an opportune break for an advance.[1254] Some of the proof was the ever widening demands directed against vital German interests, which Stalin made, exploiting the European war situation, but also the intensified Communist underground and espionage activities and the sabotage preparations in the German territories. For the Baltic states, for Finland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Turkey, the Soviet actions against East Poland (the motive for and the timing of the invasion, the increased massing of troops after the end of fighting, the hurried

construction of numerous airfields within the immediate vicinity of the demarcation line, etc.) were bound to be startling and strange at a time, when there were no indications that Hitler wanted to breach the Non-Aggression and Friendship Pact with the USSR – if only to be heedful of the dangers of a war on two fronts. The Soviet pressure on these countries, which meant an obvious threat to the vital sources of raw materials (the oil centre at Ploesti and the nickel deposits near Petsamo), was kept up even after Stalin's initial demands had been met. Further requests were made known, stretching to the point of establishing Soviet bases in the Dardanelles and Bulgaria, extending Bulgaria up to the Aegean Sea, the annexation of the remaining Bukovina, that is to say the further dismembering of Rumania, and even the right of a say in the matter of the exit points to the Baltic Sea – further "provisional" demands, as they were.

Already starting in late autumn 1939 – and in spite of a virtually undefended German Eastern front line – the Red Army was deployed on the Soviet Western border. This deployment was offensively structured and vastly strengthened on a scale hitherto unknown,[1255] stretching from Finland and the Baltic through Poland as far as Rumania and the Black Sea. This had to be regarded as further evidence of an imminently threatening large-scale offensive of Bolshevism. Up to June 1941, there had been deployed on Soviet western border regions "with extreme caution and very gradually":[1256] 13 armies of over 131 infantry divisions, 23 cavalry divisions, 36 motorised brigades and roughly 40 armoured tank divisions, coming close to 4.7 million soldiers,[1257] facts which, furthermore, were admitted.[1258] One should compare this figure with the one in 1939, when the whole of the Red Army numbered "only" 2 million men.[1259] In June 1941, the Soviet Union had 21,000 tanks, which included some light and outdated ones, as well as the mainstays of the upcoming campaign: T-34 and KV [for K. Voroshilov].[1258+1260] German military intelligence underestimated the Soviet army by 100 army units, and, besides, had "no conception of their modern weaponry."[1261]

Compare these facts, *i.e.* "the almost crushing Soviet superiority right up to the date of attack on 22 June,"[1262] with these: the German deployment, which is really only worth mentioning as of January 1941 as a starter date, its massing of troops that was not in place before 27 May 1941, and its offensive formation that was not ready until 15 June 1941 (there was

lacking, up to this date, with a few exceptions, each and every type of tank unit), [1262+1263] already required 17,000 rail transportations, in spite of it being a much smaller volume of forces (118 divisions, 19 tank divisions, 15¼ motorised divisions, with a total of 3,050,000 men = 75% of the army in the field). [1262] These facts force the conclusion that the Red Army could not have been stopped in their advance to the Atlantic coast by any armed forces in Europe, neither in 1941 nor in 1942, if Hitler had waited until their evident massing for a large-scale attack had started rolling.

The Soviet historians do not attribute the Red Army's preparations for an offensive to some concrete measures coming from the Reich government. As the goal was world revolution, consistently pursued since 1917, this is not surprising. Any imputed German aiming at world domination, any claimed German predisposition of lusting for war and a mania for conquest, "subjugating" the European countries for reasons of securing the area for a German deployment against the Soviet Union, the vast "contradictions" of the "capitalist system," etc., are mere sophistic ramblings and dialectical interpretations to disguise the Soviet Communists own policy of expansion in their propaganda. Every non-Communist has these phrases hurled in the face, as soon as he enters the political arena.

Whereas in Nuremberg 1945/46 the evidence that had been available to the Reich leadership about an impending Soviet large-scale offensive was destroyed or, at least, denied to the public, a further body of evidence did reach the public after the war. Thus, the former Soviet General Alexei Markov, who in the spring of 1941 was in command of troops on the Soviet Western frontier, put an account in the U.S. newspaper *Saturday Evening Post* of 13 May 1950, according to which Stalin, after the defeat of France in the summer of 1940, had ordered "preparations for war against Germany, because Hitler had won too quickly."

> "To his question of how much time he had available for getting his men ready for combat, he received from the Soviet General Staff the answer: 'Until autumn; we are not yet ready. We will strike when convenient for us.'"[1264]

But in the Party's official publications from Moscow, too, the Soviets have admitted Stalin's aggressive intentions at that time: "In May-June 1940" – *i.e.* during the Germany's campaign in France – "the Soviets changed their views on the war and resolved upon waging war and on the destruction of Fascism."[1265] A further official source of the Party added to

this that "the prevalent mood on the eve of war, that of an easy victory over the enemy," should later prove to have a detrimental effect.[1266] Thus, the "enemy" was decided on from the start, as was the determination to defeat him, irrespective of whether only recently one had concluded with him a Friendship Pact and lucrative economic treaties.

Further admissions can be obtained from the work *The History of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945*, published by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism at the Central Committee of the CPSU, Moscow 1960, volume I. The following quotations speak for themselves, refuting authoritatively the propaganda, dogmatised for years, of the sole German culpability for the Russian campaign or for the Second World War in general. On page 177 of the work it is stated that the foreign policy line of the Soviet Union remained, regardless of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression and Friendship Pact, unalterably geared toward

> "preparing conditions for establishing a mighty union of nations and governments against Hitler-Germany...
>
> Thanks to the German-Soviet pact, significant changes in the international situation were becoming apparent."

With no consideration for the treaty with Hitler, Moscow was giving support "on the eve and after the start of the war" to the illegal fight of the anti-Fascists in Germany.[1267] That the Soviet Union had considerably reinforced their offensive capacity in the time between 1939 and 1941 has been repeatedly emphasised by the Communists themselves. While already in June 1941 the army units "in the western military districts were in many ways superior to Germany's,"[1268] "the biggest part of the reorganisation work there was meant to be achieved between July and September 1941."[1268]

> "The Soviet Union's increased strength and capabilities allowed, in the event of war, the setting of a determined strategic goal, up to the total destruction of the aggressor in his own territory. The main consideration in the war operations for attaining these objectives was the attack, on whose theoretical elaboration great attention was focused."[1269]
>
> "We will wage the war offensively by taking it into the enemy's territory."[1270]
>
> "In accordance with the theory [*i.e.* the strategic conception] that breaking through the enemy's tactical defence is achieved with the help of offensive operations in depth, army units... were supposed to break not only the tactical, but also, and this is especially important, the operative enemy defence in depth. This breakthrough was to be carried out like lightning, so that the enemy troops have no time for retreat. The forward-charging troops had to overtake the retreating enemy and deny his reserves the opportunity to reinforce defences at the frontiers in between. They were to expose the enemy's flanks, and thus create favourable conditions for strikes into the flanks or for the encircling of enemy units."[1271]

"For the offensive operations, special importance was given to the 'shock armies,' *i.e.* especially reinforced armies which were designated for the main object of the attack."[1272]

"The combat strength of these shock armies had to be extremely powerful, according to planning: 3-4 rifle corps (12-15 rifle divisions), 1-2 motorised or cavalry corps, 3-4 air divisions, 10-12 artillery regiments, some armoured regiments, engineer battalions, units for chemical defence etc. For the main attack route, the operative concentration [of troops] for breaking through the enemy's defensive position was as follows: one rifle division per 2-2.5 kilometres, 50-100 field guns and as many tanks per kilometre. There was planned a depth of 150-250 kilometres for the offensive operations, for the operation of the shock armies a depth of 75-100 kilometres. The general width of the frontline could vary in this combat operation from between 150-300 kilometres, that of the shock armies from between 50-80 kilometres. The width of the main strike, *i.e.* the actual breakthrough zone, was to be for the frontline 60-80 kilometres, for the shock armies this was to be 20-30 kilometres. The armies were to advance an average of 10-15 kilometres in 24 hours, the motorised units 40-50 kilometres. The offensive operations had to be opened with preliminary artillery and the deployment of infantry and tanks."[1273]

"Defensive operations were not receiving much attention. The defence was regarded only as a back-up for safeguarding the attack."[1274]

"The attacking width for a rifle division was fixed at 3-4.5 kilometres, for that of a rifle corps at between 8-12 kilometres.

The air force was assigned the task of carrying out operations in depth and to gain air supremacy. According to the Soviet view prevalent at the time, Red air supremacy could also be obtained on the operational scale, provided that the mission of the air force was done unexpectedly, was massed, and without any let-up, whatever the state of the weather."[1275]

"The orders and directives for the Soviet naval forces were also oriented toward attack. Here, too, quick, sudden and concentrated strikes against enemy ships, sea routes, coastal targets and mine barrages etc., were supposed to quickly put the enemy's fleet out of action."[1276]

"The massing of troops in the special military district Kiev was very strong. In this district were located five armies and a number of mechanised units...

The forces stationed at the south-western front were sufficient for settling not only defensive tasks, but also offensive tasks...

Nevertheless, no measures whatsoever had been planned in the event of the enemy attacking without a declaration of war or should the fighting at the border not turn out in our favour."[1277]

Thus far the strategic offensive planning of the Soviet Union against the enemy along the western border: Germany. Furthermore, it is typical of Soviet historical literature to systematically suppress the German-Soviet Friendship Pact of 28 September 1939. This can only be an indication that the Soviets took that accord even less seriously than the Non-Aggression Pact with Hitler, signed four weeks earlier.

Another testimony deserves attention: The then highly decorated Commander-in-Chief of the Twentieth Soviet army, promoted at the beginning of 1942 to Deputy Commander-in-Chief of army group Volkhov, the General Andrei Andreievich Vlasov, who, in 1942 in Berlin after his capture, replied to the question of whether Stalin would have had the intention to attack Germany and what date for such an offensive would have been planned:

> "The offensive had been intended for August/September 1941. The Soviets had been forming up since the beginning of the year, which, due to the bad Soviet railroad lines, went rather slowly. Hitler judged the situation perfectly and ploughed right into the Soviets while they were deploying."[1278]

This statement is all the more significant, since Vlasov mentioned this date in the year 1942, since the testimony was available in 1945 to the Inter-Allied Military Tribunal in Nuremberg – and, irrespective of this, the already cited Soviet General Markov had, in the year 1950, specified the same date period. Therefore, with so many corresponding pieces of evidence it should have been in the interest of a Soviet state historiography of "innocence" to at least change this date. The opposite is the case. In 1960, Soviet historiography, as already mentioned, moved the date for the completion of the military deployment to between July and September 1941, although remaining more or less silent about further details.[1268] It is to be mentioned only in passing that, on entering the USSR, German troops found Soviet General Staff maps that showed objectives advancing deeply into Germany, but also other unmistakable proof of a different kind, up to the point of Soviet school text books teaching the need for the conquest of Europe.[1279]

Peculiar is the only word for describing the manner of appraisal that trivialises these facts and would like, most of all, to bury them completely, not accepting them as valid.

It is a fact that Hitler, in his *Mein Kampf*, does draw attention to the need of essential "Living space (*Lebensraum*) in the East" for the German nation. He does not, however – and this is a significant difference – claim that he was going to take it by military force, should he ever become head of the German government. Incidentally, it emerges from all the documents that there was no connection between this and the 1941 "Barbarossa" plan to invade Soviet Russia. While *Mein Kampf* was an agitation tract from a time of internal strife when Hitler was incarcerated, the plans for "Barbarossa" had been drawn up solely to forestall attacks of annihilation directed against the entire European continent by a Red Army ready and poised to strike.[1280] Given that later, in the course of the murderous conflict between Germany and the USSR, the notion of *Lebensraum* became an option, leading to the fatal consequences for the German occupational forces, resulted from the realities of this world. There would hardly be a victorious state that would not seek to counterbalance their enforced casualty toll by enlarging their

influence, their economic sphere and their strategic security. We should not particularly need to refer to Versailles 1919, to Yalta, Potsdam and Tokyo 1945. It is historically incorrect when the "Barbarossa" plan or the German Poland campaign or the Second World War as such are deduced from Hitler's explications in *Mein Kampf*. Neither Poland nor Great Britain nor France nor the USSR nor the United States of America aligned their politics along Hitler's remarks, but they became active, quite irrespective of this, in their own expansionist *Lebensraum* interests anyway.

Not the person Adolf Hitler, not the essence of his ideas of the mid-1920s, and not any single measure from the Reich government was a criterion for the Communists. Just the mere fact that he was not making himself available for Moscow's world revolutionary plans and was refusing to accept Marxism-Leninism as the absolutely ideal solution was sufficient to summarily condemn him, his party and, finally, the German people led by him as criminals, aggressors, conspirators, imperialists, militarists, capitalists etc. Hitler's success in 1933 to put a stop to the Communist infiltration of Germany was reason enough for the Communist system to start up a ruthless and worldwide campaign of defamatory statements and lies. For many decades, millions of people were forced, by use of Communism's power structure, to acknowledge the thusly established value judgments as "scientifically proven truths," as the "intellectual common property of mankind," and to risk their lives for this. It was in accordance with Communist tactics to subject one adversary (*i.e.* non-Communist politician) after the other to a heavy propaganda barrage, and to get the remaining "capitalist states," using "all kinds of tricks and all kinds of dodges," hitched up to their endeavours to smash down this nearest enemy. So it comes as no surprise to the expert that exactly the same methods of defamation and the same slogans, as had been used against the German Reich, were transferred, after the Second World War, onto the United States of America and her allies.

Communists stated openly that they even considered lies, slander, the breaking of treaties and the falsification of historiography as "moral," insofar as these served their interests, *i.e.* world revolution. This reveals how unprincipled and perilous the foundation of values was from which the Communists start out. As long as everyone was charged with a "culpability" and was even threatened with liquidation who did not think along Marxist-

Leninist – at that time still Stalinist – lines of thought and did not submit to the will of Moscow; as long as every non-Communist was labelled from the outset as aggressor and enemy of peace, one

- could not promote peace or guarantee peace,
- could not solve national problems,
- could not create international trust and
- could certainly not establish “legal principles.”

The Last Days of Peace

The German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact

On 22 August 1939 Neville Chamberlain sent a letter to Hitler – obviously prompted by the events becoming apparent in Moscow – in which he underlined, in general terms, Britain's alliance commitment to Poland and the necessity of holding discussions in a climate of trust, without, however, herewith proposing any concrete steps as had now become imperative. In his reply, Hitler referred to the causes of German-Polish tensions and pointed out that Poland would feel spurred on to further provocations, if the British government carried on giving their unconditional support to these excesses and did not use their influence in Warsaw for establishing an "atmosphere of confidence."

It was already becoming obvious on this day that the British government had brought the negotiations "to a complete stand-still," which had been initiated at a secret conference on 7 August at the German-Danish border. Held at the estate of the Swedish industrialist Birger Dahlerus, those talks were attended by Hermann Göring, General Karl Bodenschatz, an interpreter and seven British "business associates" of Dahlerus. Their outcome was that Hitler agreed to a secret four-power conference.[1281]

On 23 August, the Reich Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, signed the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact in Moscow. This accord could not have been foreseen. Hitler had concluded the Pact, because the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations, ongoing for months, were taking on a threatening character for Germany with the dispatch to Moscow of these western powers' Military Missions at the end of July, thereby confronting him with the alternative either to face this massive alliance coalition or to foil it via diplomatic channels. These Allied endeavours included Soviet expansionist advances into Central Europe. Great Britain and France were willing to actually sign over to the Soviets the Baltic States, Poland and Rumania, in stark opposition to the will of their peoples and governments,[1282] in the knowledge of "the disadvantages and risks of allowing Soviet troops on Polish soil."[1283]

It comes as a shock to discover that, on 23 August, the French Foreign Minister, Bonnet, availed himself of the lie of alleging to London the Polish consent to Russian troops marching through Polish territory, and that Halifax recognises this lie and, nevertheless, forwards a note to the Head of the British delegation in Moscow, Admiral Drax, that he should endorse the statements of the French General Doumenc.[1284]

In July 1940, after resuming these contacts, the British Ambassador in Moscow, Cripps, at the suggestion of his government, was recommending to Stalin to also take possession of the Balkans and of some reservations in the Dardanelles.[1285]

The British guarantee to Poland, which merely concerned the German-Polish border, was thereby exposed, in the light of the thus contrived state of affairs, as a wicked hypocrisy that camouflaged war-minded intentions. The British Ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, admitted to Lord Halifax in a letter of 22 August 1939 that Hitler had been forced by Britain into taking this step in Moscow:

> "But I cannot say that I was surprised as I have always felt that our policy with Poland would only end by driving Germany and Russia together. At least one cannot blame Germany."[1286]

Taking cognisance of these facts, Hitler cannot be blamed that the Non-Aggression Pact which he concluded with Moscow likewise made provisions for modifications, which in the secret additional protocol were expressed in the delimiting of the spheres of interest as "in the event of territorial changes," although such changes were by far less far-reaching than those which the British and French were willing to concede to the USSR. Nevertheless, the Non-Aggression Pact with Stalin, unlike the Allied venture, was not a military alliance. Furthermore, Hitler had not concluded it with the idea of unleashing a war. Hitler's striving and the striving of the Reich Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, but also that of Field Marshal Göring in the unofficial diplomatic course of action taken from 23 August to 1 September 1939, continued to be focused, taking advantage of Moscow's change of course, on attaining amicable relations with Britain and a settlement with Poland, as the Reich government had informed Stalin as well as Mr. Chamberlain.[1287] Even the fact that Ribbentrop had asked the Soviets to mass troops along the Polish frontier is merely to be understood in that this display was to induce Poland into yielding and thus to an amicable settlement.[1288] Before the beginning of war, there were neither any

plans for combined action against Poland, nor did the Reich government endeavour, until Britain's and France's declaration of war against Germany, to persuade the USSR into joining the German side in a conflict with Poland. These facts refute the hypothesis that the Non-Aggression Pact had as its aim, on Germany's part, the destruction of Poland or the unleashing of a war in general.[1289]

> "For the sake of historical truth, one must clearly bear in mind that Stalin's first attempt to chum-up on 10 March [1939], was well taken note of in Germany and, besides, was correctly understood, but that there was no reciprocal response from the German side. Only after the Anglo-French guarantee declaration to Poland and after the Polish excesses against everything German does Hitler come to regard Stalin as a possible ally."[1290]

Former State Secretary Meissner explains Hitler's motives as follows:

> "At the conclusion of the Moscow Pact, Hitler was convinced, in so far as one can infer from his own demeanour and his own comments, of the necessity and of a long continuance of German-Russian co-operation, and he was ready to subordinate the ideological differences between National Socialism and Bolshevism to reasons of political realism. I was witness to various discussions during which Hitler tried most insistently to convince leading party members of the soundness of his decision."[1291]

In a like manner, the former Councillor of Embassy, Hilger, stated:

> "As for Hitler, I can say the following: Both when the treaties with the Soviet Union were concluded and in the subsequent few months, he appears to have believed firmly that the German-Russian agreement not only fulfilled their immediate purpose but would for a long time to come form the basis for a relationship that could benefit both partners. I have reliable information to the effect that Hitler repeatedly voiced this opinion before his closest entourage in the fall of 1939. Apparently Hitler was not at that time worried by the idea that Stalin might put a Germany weakened by the war under pressure. On the contrary, he seemed to be convinced that Germany's military superiority was secured for a long time and that, for that reason alone, Stalin would feel obliged to adhere to the existing treaties."[1292]

Marching Orders of 23 August

The situation was indeed changing decisively because of the agreement. The treaty – which of course sealed the failure of the British-French-Soviet negotiations – was bound to produce a shock effect in the countries of the West. Hitler was trying to take advantage of this situation by fixing, on 23 August, the operation order against Poland with the completion date of 26 August.[1293] Field Marshal Keitel stated in his account written in the Nuremberg IMT-prison,

> "that the lifting of restrictions on troop movements toward the Polish frontier was so timed that, after marching during the hours of darkness, the actions were to start in the early hours of the 26."[1294]

On 23 August, there was only

> "ordered a moving into the initial positions for the offensive on 26 August. In this connection, Hitler expressly commanded that there was to be a guarantee that a counter-order would bring operations to a halt. This counter-order was issued on 25 August at 18.15 p.m."[1295]

Field Marshal Milch answered at the IMT in Nuremberg to the question of whether he had heard about the first order to attack:

> "Yes, I did know about it, *i.e.* that no attack was to take place, to be perfectly correct, but there was to be a stand-by for an attack. With that, the word 'attack' had not yet been given. There is still a difference."[1296]

Since Hitler – just like every politician, who is in a position to do so – used to avail himself of the military form of pressure for achieving his goals, while concealing from his generals the political aim of the military measures, so this order from 23 August, despite apparently being perfectly unambiguous in military terms, cannot be considered as a conclusive decision, politically speaking. But in the question of war guilt, the decisive factor is the judging of the political objective!

Keitel gave an account of a letter which Hitler had sent to Mussolini at that very same time:

> "Hitler was counting on the immediate transmission of the contents of the letter to London through his so 'trustworthy' Foreign Ministry. The letter was to make clear there, in Hitler's estimation, the earnestness of his intentions; on the other hand, it was not to divulge the actual time of military operations, so that the Poles would, in fact, be warned, but the intended tactical surprise of the attack was maintained. By bringing forward the time schedule, Hitler wished to accelerate, in the last analysis, the hoped-for British intervention for averting the war, which he was certainly counting upon, and for which he was expecting Mussolini's support."[1297]

Hitler was probably also counting on his military decisions being transmitted to Britain – Germany, as an "open country," was not at all protected against espionage like the USSR – and therewith was seeking to coerce London into making an earnest effort for a compromise solution. Also, one must take into consideration that Hitler might have wanted to test how the Wehrmacht would function when put on maximum alert. In any case, and in this the statements of all individuals concerned show a large degree of unanimity, Hitler had his military order of 23 August tied in with his political intention of inducing Britain and Poland back to the negotiation table. However, this arithmetic did not work out.

Field Marshal von Manstein confirms this basic position:

> "At all events, it was entirely conceivable that the military measures taken in August 1939 – despite Operation 'Order White' – were directed towards increasing political pressure on Poland. Since the summer, on orders from Hitler, work had been proceeding at feverish speed on an

[defensive] Ostwall – an eastern equivalent of the Siegfried Line. Whole divisions, the 18th among them, were moved to the Polish frontier in constant rotation to work on this fortification for several weeks at a stretch. What was the point of all this effort if Hitler were going to attack Poland? Even if, contrary to all his assurances, he were contemplating a war on two fronts, the Ostwall would still have been quite out of place, since the only proper action for Germany in such circumstances would be to attack and overwhelm Poland first while remaining on the defensive in the west. The reverse solution – offensive action in the west and defensive measures in the east – was quite out of the question with the present ratio of forces, especially as neither plans nor preparations for an offensive in the west had been made. So if the construction of an Ostwall were to have any rhyme or reason in the present situation, it could surely only be to exert pressure on Poland by placing large troop concentrations on her frontier. Even the deployment of infantry divisions on the east bank of the Oder in the last ten days of August and the movement of the armored and motorized divisions into assembly areas initially west of the river need not really have been preparations for an attack: they could just as well have been a form of political pressure."[1298]

The big let-down of 25 August was for Hitler that Mussolini did not act according to the spirit of his intentions. Keitel recalls from memory:

"Only then was the most profound cause of his disappointment about Mussolini's 'betrayal' revealed. He said something like: 'Without a doubt, Britain is already informed that Italy is unwilling to render support; as of now, Britain's attitude will stiffen, and [Britain] will give a boost to Poland. The political effect of my letter is exactly the reverse of my expectations.'" [1294]

Mussolini, meanwhile, had a reply delivered by Ambassador Attolico to Hitler on 25 August in the afternoon, in which he made the honouring of his alliance obligations incumbent upon unrealisable demands for supplies from Germany: 6 million tons of coal, 2 million tons of steel, 7 million tons of petroleum etc., along with 150 anti-aircraft batteries. After this kind of response, Hitler had to be prepared for the fact that Britain had been informed of Italy's position and would, henceforth, reject every compromise even more emphatically. Indeed, straight afterwards, Hitler really did receive a telegraphic notification that Great Britain had linked her fate with that of Poland even more closely with an extended guarantee agreement.

The political objective of the military measures was thereby rendered invalid. The marching orders were cancelled immediately.

Hitler did not expect, nor did he want, Italy's military participation in a conflict over Poland, but was merely interested in the political solidarity of the Axis partner. The political snub from Italy, all the more grave as Britain was notified right away of Italy's absolute neutrality, did shake Hitler considerably, principally in view of the inevitable hardening of the British position and the resulting consequences. On 22 August, Chamberlain had

again underlined Britain's commitment to Poland – it was not this commitment, which affected Hitler on 25 August. From the start, Hitler was aware that he could not split up the Polish-British front. All the documents relating to this matter agree on this point. He had issued the stand-by order on 23 August knowing of these circumstances; he countermanded it, practically under the same circumstances: Italy's non-participation, Britain's alliance pledge to Poland, as well as an intervention from London failing to materialise. Yes, he did withdraw it, although on 23 August Poland had decided on "bringing a great part of the Army [¾] up to war strength."[1299]

This state of things proves that the order from 23 August pursued the political aim to force negotiations with the leverage of military decision-taking looming ahead. After all, without this pressure, no negotiations had been initiated for many months, quite the opposite: Poland's provocations had been increasing constantly! Henderson, also, could no longer see on 24 August

> "... any hope of avoiding war, unless the Polish Ambassador is instructed to apply today or at the latest tomorrow for personal interview with Hitler (which admittedly at this late hour he may well refuse to grant)."[1300]

There are further indications pointing out that the marching orders from 23 August were pursuing this political aim:

a. While the "Directive No 1 for the Conduct of War" of 31 August 1939 is available verbatim in its entirety and is, after all, quite voluminous, no written document for the order to attack from 23 August is known to exist. But in the German Wehrmacht it was not usual to issue such a decisive order merely verbally.
b. Hitler's plan "Operation White" was intended for 1 September 1939 as the earliest date; to have brought it forward would have made many operative changes necessary, about which, however, nothing is known to exist.
c. On 25 August, for example, the German troops on the Western frontier had not yet taken up their defensive grounds – this was only scheduled for 1 September. No orders are known to exist that would have meant a premature occupation of these defensive constructions.[1301]

d. Whereas advance measures on an increasing scale had already been set in motion on 18 August, the order for mobilisation without public proclamation was issued by Berlin only around midday on 25 August.[1302] This camouflaged mobilisation had to be undertaken in a way that could not give rise to an aggravation in the foreign political field as a consequence; subsequently, it was thus arranged independently of the marching orders from 23 August and, thereby, was also pursuing a different political objective – it was not joined to an order for advance, while, on the other hand, the marching orders from 23 August were not linked to the camouflaged mobilisation.

There was no cause, then, for Hitler to call off on 25 August the marching orders of 23 August, had these been meant seriously; after all, the stance of the opponents had not changed from 23 August. If only a few days before he was prepared to march, then he should still have marched on 25 August. Since he did not march, the political sincerity of the marching orders from 23 August has to be disputed. The question remains: Would Hitler also have suspended the marching orders at the last minute (this was done on 25 August afternoon),[1303] if Great Britain had not taken any action whatsoever on 25 August? There is no unequivocal answer, since there is no proof for this hypothetical case. The only indication speaking in favour of a cancellation of the order, even in this instance, should be Hitler's alliance offer that he made to Great Britain at midday on 25 August. On no account could one have expected, after all, that Great Britain take up this offer, only to have it followed the very next day by German troops marching into Poland. Furthermore, in no way can this last-minute offer be interpreted as a tactical, military diversionary manoeuvre, as Britain was in no position, anyhow, to military intervene straightaway in an invasion of Poland by German troops and, besides, it was to be assumed that Poland already had knowledge of the marching orders of the Wehrmacht and thus could not be side-tracked. At any rate, Hitler told the British Ambassador, Henderson, on 25 August at 1.30 p.m. that he would be approaching Britain with a generous alliance offer, after having settled the German-Polish problems. That such a plan could only be successful after a peaceable "settlement of the German-Polish problem," goes without saying. Britain was meant to help, in view of these propositions offered by Hitler for a future German-

British collaboration, to induce Poland to yield. Neither Chamberlain nor Henderson ever mentioned that Hitler had intended, or could have intended, a "military settlement." These gentlemen were convinced, rather, that it was the Poles that needed to be brought to their senses and not the Germans.[1304]

Incidentally, Chamberlain's biographer, K. Feiling, confirmed that the British Prime Minister, too, had interpreted Hitler's offer to Britain of 25 August 1939 – in spite of being aware of the military stand-by in Germany – on the understanding of a peaceful resolution with Poland:

> "The communications with Hitler and Goering ... gave the impression, probably with intention, that it was possible to persuade Hitler to accept a peaceful and reasonable solution of the Polish question, in order to get to an Anglo-German agreement, which be continually declared to be his greatest ambition."[1305]

The Activities of the British Government from 25-28 August

The reaction from the British government to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact and the news that Italy would stay away in case of a conflict was such that it could only lead to an intensification of the existing tensions. Instead of trying for negotiations on the matters of conflict needing to be dealt with – which most certainly would have prompted Hitler to withdraw the marching orders immediately, since "Hitler did not want war with Poland"[1306] – London hardened its positions by extending the guarantee to Poland, inclusive of vast contingencies, and failed to initiate mediation. The British government judged the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact as a war pact – incorrectly with regard to Hitler's intentions – and got "into position," *i.e.* prepared for an armed conflict.[1307] On 23 August 1939, the Chief Political Advisor to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Vansittart, "referring to the statement about the Cabinet meeting," told the Hungarian Minister in London:

> "Britain would not yield in any event. Even if violence were not offered to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Poland, Britain would immediately mobilise and go into action."[1308]

Winston Churchill writes impressively in his memoirs about these military measures, which were taken both by the British leadership and the Dominion governments and the Colonies at the news of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact.[1309] It was a question of a world-wide mobilisation –

against Germany, not for instance (also) against the Soviet Union. Therefore, not morals and humanitarianism could have been London's motives. London failed to take into account that it was only the British-Soviet military negotiations which moved Hitler to come to an arrangement with the Soviet Union. One may accept extenuating circumstances for the British reaction to the events of 23 August, but from the blame of having provoked the Stalin-Hitler Pact in the first place, London cannot be acquitted. The British reaction made the situation even more hopeless and emboldened those powers that had an interest in a military conflict against Germany. Peaceful means of reconciliation were not at all considered. [1307]

On 26 August, on Hitler's advice, Ambassador Henderson took the German alliance offer of 25 August to London. There he was detained until 5.00 p.m. of 28 August, a time span, which led to a "stagnation" of the talks.[1310] When on that 28 August Henderson presented to Hitler at 10.30 p.m. the British reply to his alliance offer to Britain and to his request for assisting him in settling the German-Polish differences (from 25 August), Hitler was bound to believe that the British government had utilised the three days for intensive talks with Warsaw and had influenced Poland to negotiate now, under the patronage of Great Britain and France. Emphasising that the situation was "extremely urgent," Hitler was informed that the British government would be ready,

> "to proceed as soon as practicable to such discussions... His Majesty's Government have already received a definite assurance from the Polish Government that they are prepared to enter into discussions on this basis."[1311]

In expectation of this mediation, thus confirmed, and of the now existing Polish readiness for negotiations, Hitler would now draw up his negotiation proposal, which he handed to Ambassador Henderson on 29 August.

Hitler, however, had no knowledge of what had really taken place during those three days (26-28 August) in London. He was unaware that Lord Halifax had not taken advantage of these three days for making any effort at mediation, and that he had, with treacherous intentions, falsified the reply to Hitler, the most important *démarche* before the outbreak of war. The Polish readiness for negotiations, as asserted, did not at all exist and, furthermore, the British government was not willing to mediate, since, according to the statement made by the British Foreign Secretary to the Polish Ambassador on 25 August, "any attempt to patch matters up [was] out of the

question."[1312] This deception by Halifax, hitherto veiled in various ways, had also not been realised for a long time by historians, since they too had been fooled by several falsified documents, or rather, documents based on false reports (one of them in the *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, the others in the "Polish White Book," the "British Blue Book," and the "French Yellow Book").

On 28 August Halifax fabricated an alleged telephone message coming from Kennard at 4.00 p.m., the subject matter being the Polish readiness to negotiate, and smuggled it into the British documents. For the historian today, it makes its appearance as doc. 420 in the *Documents on British Foreign Policy.* This "document" cannot be genuine, and it is thanks to the historical contribution of a German to have discovered this, twenty years after the end of the war, and to have drawn the historian's attention to it.[1313]

Here is the step by step proof:

1. The "British Blue Book," published immediately after the start of the war, contains no evidence for this Polish assent for negotiations, although Prime Minister Chamberlain asserted to the House of Commons on 1 September 1939 that the "British Blue Book" (which, strangely enough, had been almost fully completed already before the outbreak of the German-Polish conflict)[1314] included all the important documents.
2. The "Polish White Book," put together by the Polish government in exile at the beginning of 1940 in Britain, has under No. 96 a notification from Beck to his Ambassadors in London and Paris of 28 August 1939:

> "The British Ambassador has consulted me on the question of an answer to M. Hitler. I agreed to inform the German government that Poland was ready to negotiate, and asked him to define what the British government understood by the conception 'international guarantee.'
> Please treat the entire question of the consultation as strictly confidential."

This "document," too has evidently been fabricated subsequently, "in consultation" with the British government: Beck could never have chosen, on 28 August, this kind of formulation for the British government, because a "consultation" about the note to Hitler simply does not correspond to the facts. But to mention this misleading basis in this "note," moreover, not only once but twice, makes the falsification even more obvious. – Halifax had the British note presented in Berlin without having notified Poland beforehand, never mind asking for requests to be conveyed to Hitler.

3. On 27 August, Lord Halifax was sent this message at 10.46 p.m. from Warsaw:

> "Mr Beck has just informed me (Kennard) that, in view of the nature of Herr Hitler's language regarding Poland in his conversation with Sir N. Henderson (25 August), the Polish government have decided on full mobilisation which is to take place at once."[1315]

Only on 28 August (one day later) at 7.00 p.m. – three hours after the ostensible Polish assent for negotiation! (doc. 420 – 4.00 p.m.) – and only after the arrival of a further communiqué on mobilisation measures from Warsaw (doc. 424) did he check back,

> "I am at a loss to know what precisely in Hitler's language to Sir N. Henderson led the Polish Government last night to take these measures of mobilisation."[1316]

Halifax did not endeavour to check, how the Polish government was to reconcile these measures with the assent for negotiations (allegedly) given in the meantime.

4. The manifold evidence in the British documents, showing the intensive efforts made by the British Foreign Secretary for gaining a favourable "world opinion" with regard to the Polish attitude,[1317] sheds light on the drastic remedy that was used eventually – the deliberate false report – by a man who had described, since the conclusion of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, "any attempt to patch matters up" as being "out of the question."[1318]

> "Colonel Beck was apprehensive of negotiations, not because they seemed hopeless, but for fear lest Hitler really consented to a compromise, and also lest Britain perhaps show an inclination to impose the compromise on Poland."[1319]
>
> "There was no chance of extracting concessions from the Poles once the danger of war was removed, and the British knew it."[1320]

5. Halifax arranged the facts according to his objective:
    a. Although Henderson, as already mentioned, was staying in London for three days, Halifax asked Poland for their consent for negotiations only then (28 August – 2.00 p.m.), when it was quite certain that Poland would not be able to reply before Henderson's return flight to Berlin. It was not possible, within two hours, that Kennard could have been informed, could have had an audience with Beck and to have already forwarded his answer to the Foreign Office. The (alleged) answer, however, is already back again in London in two hours – at 4.00 p.m. (doc. 420). Kennard's task stated clearly (doc. 411) to "endeavour to see" M. Beck,

which was in accordance with diplomatic practice – although this could never have facilitated such a speedy reply. The actual answer from Beck to this British step was then only made on 31 August.[1321] This delaying, on the other hand, would appear inexplicable, if Beck had answered immediately – already on 28 August – as the "Polish White Book" doc. 96 and the British doc. 420 claim.

b. The German government was to be given the impression that the Polish consent for negotiations was available unconditionally. For this it required an ambassador who himself believed this to be so. Now, Henderson was critical, having urgently demanded, still on 24 August, the immediate dispatch of a Polish plenipotentiary.[1322] He now was sent to Berlin at 5.00 p.m. on 28 August, convinced that the British government had been sounding things out in Warsaw and was expecting, any minute, the Polish consent for negotiations. This was the reason why Halifax did not give him the British note to take to Hitler, but sent it to him in a telegram one hour later. Once he was back in Berlin, he could neither question nor check his Foreign Secretary's assertion that the Polish consent for negotiations had arrived in the meantime.

c. The general disposition within the three days (26-28 August) was absolutely strange during that critical time and has never been explained.

6. Ambassador Kennard was received by Beck in the evening of 28 August. Only in the early morning of 29 August was the British leadership to learn of the outcome of the talks.[1323] Thus, they could not have been in possession of this answer already on 28 August at 4.00 p.m. For the rest, Kennard did not have any comment on the Polish consent for negotiations, nor could he intimate a "new course" in Warsaw, and he could neither give an indication that one was now awaiting Hitler's diplomatic reaction. But on the contrary, it was Beck to advise Kennard that for tonight a *fait accompli* was to be expected in Danzig, "in the event of not receiving a satisfactory reply" from the Danzig Senate. Thereupon Kennard felt himself obligated to warn Beck.[1323]
7. On 28 August at 2.00 p.m.,[1324] Halifax had asked Kennard in Warsaw to convey the outcome of his talk with Beck not only to London, but also,

simultaneously, to Berlin, Paris and Rome. In the reply, (allegedly) transmitted two hours later, Kennard "confirms" (allegedly) the implementation of this task. The subsequent smuggling in of this telegram[1325] is also proved in that in reality neither Henderson (Berlin) nor Phipps (Paris) nor Loraine (Rome) learnt about it. Also, none of the Polish Ambassadors in these cities ever received this piece of news from Warsaw. All of Henderson's urging upon Lipski, the Polish Ambassador in Berlin, right into the last hours of peace, turned into the realisation, or rather proof, that the latter was so tightly restrained by instructions from Warsaw to the point that he was not to display any interest in any note whatsoever from the Reich government and was not authorised to enter into any definite negotiations.

So that this fraudulent manoeuvre should not be noticed by the nations of the world at the start of the war, the concluding part of the task was not printed in the "British Blue Book" (doc. 73).

8. On 28 August at 6.00 p.m., Lord Halifax telegraphed Kennard[1326] that he has informed the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, of the substance of the British note sent at 2.00 p.m. to Warsaw, with the request for the Polish consent for negotiations. Continuing, Halifax mentions: "If a favourable answer to this is received in time..." Halifax could really only put this passage into this telegram at 6.00 p.m., if the Polish consent for negotiations was not in hand at this stage. Hence this doc. 420, according to which this consent had already come in two hours earlier, can therefore not be genuine.

   Halifax, in his deceitful conduct, had made a slip – just two hours after smuggling in the false note.

   This has likewise occurred to the editors of the *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, because they provided doc. 430 with a footnote (5) that "this telegram was evidently drafted before the receipt of No. 420," yet an explanation for this they did not give.

9. Halifax informed his Ambassador in Warsaw on 29 August retrospectively on the kind of talk with Raczynski (28 August).[1327] Halifax stated that Raczynski "appeared to be somewhat out of touch with his government [and] did not have any comment to make." No mentioning that perchance he had announced or confirmed the Polish consent for negotiations. Neither was he interested to know what Britain

meant by an "international guarantee." On the other hand, Raczynski did inquire about the British reply to Hitler and

> "whether His Majesty's Government would make any demand for a truce. I replied that there was nothing in the reply to this effect, but that His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin might be asked to impress on Herr Hitler the necessity for the cessation of provocation if discussions were to commence. Count Raczynski thought that this would be helpful, as it was important to avoid any impression of weakness." [1327]

Halifax had made no demands of Poland for a truce, but he did, on the other hand, name Berlin as the address which had to be influenced for provocation to end. Neither in his conversation with Raczynski nor in his note to Warsaw[1328] did Halifax enjoin the Poles to talks with Germany, but instead he underlined:

> "Failure to secure a just settlement of German-Polish differences would ruin hopes of Anglo-German understanding, and might lead to war, with un-told suffering and loss to many countries." [1328]

In view of this and similar statements from the British Foreign Secretary at this stage, the following sentence could only have been written for the files:

> "His Majesty's Government have made representations to the Polish Government that they should express willingness to enter into discussions on this basis." [1328]

Truth is: Poland's conduct was once again sanctioned unreservedly for the past, the present and the future.

10. For an explanation, what the British government understands by an "international guarantee," Minister for Foreign Affairs Beck only asked on 31 August,[1329] which he would not have done, if
    a. he had already (according to doc. 420) asked about it on 28 August, and
    b. if Halifax had answered this question, which the Poles (according to doc. 420) apparently considered to be urgent, and which Beck called on 31 August, "this fundamental question [of] the Polish government."

Halifax should have answered this question post haste, having at the same time made Hitler aware of the "matter of the utmost urgency."[1330] If one imputes doc. 420 (28 August – 4.00 p.m. – Polish consent for negotiations, plus the question about the "international guarantee") to be genuine, one must then conclude that Halifax was working toward war,

because he refused to give the Polish partner an answer to this pressing question. Either way, this doc. 420 proves Halifax's policy for war.

It is most strange to find that precisely those places in doc. 609 (Beck's reply of 31 August), which could give information about whether Beck's enquiry ("international guarantee") concerns a question asked for the first time or whether it was just being reiterated, are not printed, since, according to the editors of the *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, "the text is here uncertain."

11. On 28 August, Halifax transmits, likewise at 6.00 p.m., the gist of the British note to Hitler (doc. 431) to the Ambassadors in Washington, Warsaw, Paris and Rome. He did state, it is true, that His Majesty's government had made endeavours for the Polish consent for negotiations (which is factually correct, but the Ambassadors had kept from them the extremely late stage of this attempt). The telegrams, however, contain no comment about the Polish consent (ostensibly received two hours earlier), which should have been announced, after all the incidents and the months of refusal to negotiate from Warsaw, as a sensation precisely in this telegram. Only a day later, on 29 August at 10.50 a.m.,[1331] did Halifax inform his Ambassadors in Washington and Rome – of all people only these! – that in view of the Polish consent for negotiations having arrived in the meantime, the British note to Hitler was altered. This communication was a lie, since
    a. the Polish consent for negotiations, as has been shown, was not at all in hand,
    b. the note to Hitler was not at all altered, but instead of giving it to Henderson to take with him to Berlin, as everyone must have expected, it was forwarded to him by telegram,
    c. it is not comprehensible why – with Beck supposedly having agreed to negotiate at 4.00 p.m. – Halifax should not have added this important communication to the already outgoing dispatches at 6.00 p.m.

Lord Halifax undertook a further step toward war on this 28 August: Early at 9.30 a.m., he was informed by the Chargé d'Affaires of the British embassy in Berlin, Ogilvie-Forbes, of the outcome of a talk between Field Marshal Göring and the Swedish industrialist Birger Dahlerus, whose good offices for mediation between Germany and Britain had been called upon

by Göring already since July 1939. Point 5 of this report to the Foreign Office reads:

> "Field-Marshal Göring, after consultation with Herr Hitler, requests that the British reply should neither be published nor communicated to Parliament until Herr Hitler has had time to comment on it and possibly suggest modifications."[1332]

In the afternoon of this self-same day – Henderson was on his flight back to Germany – Halifax conveyed to his Ambassadors in Washington, Warsaw, Paris and Rome the gist of the British reply to Hitler[1333] – without the additional remark that the Polish consent for negotiations was in hand. However, Kennard in Warsaw received a separate advance notice telling him, among other things,[1334] that the Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, had already been apprised of the substance of the reply made to Hitler – but was asked not to transmit it to Warsaw in cypher. While it was already unusual to steer this British reply along two different routes to Warsaw (it would have sufficed for Raczynski to have received just a copy for his own information), it had to be even more unusual to induce the Polish Ambassador into an action that was quite uncommon – and could not only cause a public sensation, but was bound to do so. For the recipient of this information (Raczynski) did thereby not consider himself obliged to maintain secrecy; the receivers of his information, on the other hand (the journalists), naturally took up this piece of news immediately and made a big splash of this "sensation." These journalists ("the press") could hardly fail to notice the sphere of responsibility, but the Prime Minister, who was carrying the responsibility of the government, on the other hand, knew nothing of the arrangement. Inquiries into the source of the information would have led, in fact, to Raczynski but, as a result of the now rapid succession of events, no further.

Again, Halifax had outplayed the "appeasement politicians" in Britain, as far as they would still have been in leading positions, but also those abroad. How this manipulation even outraged Mr. Chamberlain – shown clearly in letters to his sister – though without recognising the initiator and, by that time, no longer being one of the "appeasement politicians," is attested to by his speech in the House of Commons on 29 August 1939:

> "There is one thing that I would like to say at this moment with regard to the press. I think it is necessary once more to urge the press to exercise the utmost restraint at a time when it is quite possible for a few thoughtless words in a paper, perhaps not of particular importance, to wreck the whole of the efforts which are being made by the Government to obtain a satisfactory solution. I

have heard that an account purporting to be a verbatim description of the communication of the British government to Herr Hitler was telegraphed to another country last night or this morning. Such an account could only be an invention from beginning to end. It is, I think, very unfortunate that journalists in the exercise of their profession should take such responsibilities upon themselves, responsibilities which affect not only themselves, but the inhabitants, perhaps, of all the countries in the world…

I should be glad if I could disclose to the House the fullest information as to the contents of the communications exchanged with Herr Hitler, but hon. members will understand that in a situation of such extreme delicacy, and when issues so grave hang precariously in the balance, it is not in the public interest to publish these confidential communications or to comment on them in detail at this stage."[1335]

The French government, too, did not keep, on 27-28 August, to their promise to Hitler of maintaining secrecy on the exchange of letters between the Chancellor of the Reich and Daladier, but gave the press fresh ammunition to play with in the form of possible distortions and aggravations.[1336] Thereupon Hitler felt compelled to publish his exchange of letters with the French Prime Minister.

The Polish government knew, though, what this "guideline"[1337] indicated and in what direction the leading forces in Britain and France were heading. Furthermore, since the version that was sent on to Raczynski and subsequently published by the British press did not contain the passage that the Polish consent for negotiations was in hand, whereas, on the other hand, it was precisely on the basis of this passage that Hitler was persuaded to agree to negotiations at the earliest possible moment, Poland was bound to regard it as a cause for intensifying their provocations. Just how dishonestly Halifax was pursuing this game, can also be seen by the fact that he had not informed Warsaw of having asserted to Hitler Poland's readiness for negotiations and that on Germany's part negotiations would be welcomed. This was all the more serious, since, at the same time, Halifax was passing on to Poland further alarming military news, apparently gleaned from German resistance people (28 August),[1338] and he stated on 29 August that he

"could not take the responsibility of advising the Polish Government against any action which they consider necessary for their security."[1339]

The result was the Polish general mobilisation, for which London made no reproach to the Polish partner, not even subsequently. On 29 August at 4.00 p.m., Count Szembek apprised the British and French Ambassadors of the just then decided Polish general mobilisation, which, "however, only completed the military measures already taken at an earlier stage."[1340] As

pertaining to this step, the Polish government referred specifically to the warning, forwarded from London the day before, about German troop movements and about Germany's intention "to make a surprise attack on Poland." [1340] The general mobilisation was to have been announced early in the morning on the following day. Because of the diplomatic exchanges between London and Warsaw, it was postponed for several hours until the afternoon of 30 August (2.30 p.m.).

The Meeting between Hitler and Henderson on 29 August

Meanwhile Hitler had learnt through the intelligence service about the further Polish mobilisation on 28 August and about the concentration of Polish units at the border,[1341] but in addition also about the internal decree for a general mobilisation taken in the afternoon of 29 August. Hitler did not even try to hide from British Ambassador Henderson the fact that he had such far-reaching secret sources to Warsaw.[1342] Two and three quarters of an hour later, at 6.45 p.m., and fully cognisant of these military and political happenings behind the scenes in Warsaw that required immediate German counter-measures, Hitler asked for a Polish representative invested with plenipotentiary powers to arrive on 30 August in his reply to the British government, "in consideration of the urgency of the fact that two fully mobilised armies were standing face to face and the Germans living in Poland were being subjected to atrocious and barbarous ill-treatment."[1343] Hitler stated specifically in this communication that Germany had no intention of attacking vital Polish interests or of questioning the existence of an independent Polish State. At the same time, Hitler gave to understand that proposals for a solution would be drawn up immediately.

But what was the attitude and behaviour of the British Ambassador at this audience on 29 August? Had he been inspired by the resistance faction from the German Foreign Office, who were trying hard, during this "August crisis," to prevent "another Munich or another Prague"?[1344] State Secretary von Weizsäcker had often influenced him in this way.[1345] Henderson was well aware of the gravity of the situation and of the importance of this meeting with Hitler, *i.e.* of Hitler's response to the delayed British note. He

himself admitted, in view of his meeting with Hitler the day before, that he was not "without hope" that Hitler would let reason prevail. Nevertheless, before these talks on 29 August, that is without knowing how Hitler was going to react at all and how the German reply to the British note of 28 August would turn out, he "had decided after careful prior consideration"[1346] to let himself "go with Hitler" and to shout at the German Chancellor, since "Hitler is an abnormality [and it] might do good [to] be given a dose of his own medicine." [1346] Henderson elaborated on these talks in a private letter to Lord Halifax:

> "So when he gave me the opportunity on a minor point, namely our utter disregard for Germans murdered in Poland, I did fairly let him have it...
>
> He [Hitler] did not react in any noticeable way, but I have no doubt that it was a disagreeable and unusual surprise...
>
> I must add that after the worst of it I started to get up to go, but he would not budge." [1346]

In another letter about these talks Henderson adds:

> "I therefore proceeded to out-shout Herr Hitler. I told him that I would not listen to such language [reference: the murdering of Minority Germans in Poland] from him or anybody. Such a state [recte: statement] was intolerable and an example of all his exaggeration...
>
> He made no response, and I continued to use the same forcible language throughout the interview..."[1347]

Ribbentrop recorded that Henderson had even banged the table.[1348] With regard to the conduct of the British Ambassador, three different points need to be established:

1. The assertion made by Hitler – this "minor point"! – "that I or His Majesty's Government did not care a row of pins whether Germans were slaughtered in Poland or not" was factually correct. After all, Britain really was not concerned about that but had instead, already in spring of 1939, given Poland expressly to understand that, regarding the guarantee, they would ignore the question of the aggressor.[1349] During these decisive days, too, the British government had not even made any enquiries into the German grievances, let alone induce the Poles to yield, although they were undoubtedly fully informed by their secret service sources about the prevailing conditions.

   Anyone who takes – "after careful prior consideration"! – factually correct statements as an opportunity to "shout" henceforth during a politically important discussion puts himself in the wrong and pronounces himself guilty.

2. The persecution of the German ethnic minority in Poland, which Henderson now trivialised as a "minor point," had been commented on by him in telegrams during previous days as follows:

   On 21 August to Halifax:

   "... fact remains that there are now probably at least 10,000 refugees in Germany, that German institutions are systematically being closed, German workmen dismissed, etc., etc.

   It must be realised that the conflict has now gone beyond Danzig. Patience can be urged on Hitler in respect of the Free City, but it would serve the opposite purpose to preach it in respect of the persecution of the German minority. I am not attempting to apportion blame but to state facts. For a settlement of the minority question, direct and immediate contact between Warsaw and Berlin seems to me essential."[1350]

   Also on 21 August to Halifax:

   "I had tea with a friend of mine yesterday (X or if you like W) [meant was resistance member E. von Weizsäcker] and he earnestly harped on immediate action. While he admitted press exaggeration, he assured me that what was taking place was a form of enforced German migration from Poland, where no Germans were being allowed to find a living. That is the urgent question. I spoke of patience, and he said at once the very mention of that word would send Hitler into a frenzy. The crux of the question today is not Danzig but the minorities…

   The Times correspondent here has just told me that he telephoned yester-day to his opposite number in Warsaw who told him that the Poles were being 'incredibly foolish.'"[1351]

   On 24 August to Halifax:

   "Herr Hitler's reply clearly indicates that the immediate question is not so much Danzig and the Corridor, which by implication can wait for a later solution, as the persecution of the German minority…

   …there is no doubt that there is much ground for German complaints in this respect. The expropriation law referred to in the Warsaw telegram no. 271 is to me, I submit, the basic indication of a very understandable but equally inopportune effort to get [rid of] the German population in Poland under cover of guarantees of the Western Powers."[1352]

   On 28 August, Henderson receives a circular dispatch from Halifax, which was sent simultaneously to Washington, Warsaw, Paris and Rome:

   "His Majesty's Government agree that one of the principal dangers in the German-Polish situation is reports of the treatment of minorities."[1353]

   Thus Henderson had been put in the picture about the state of affairs by quite dissimilar and trusted informants of his. That he should then choose to trivialise as a "minor point" precisely this of all subject matters and to take it as an opportunity for provoking the Head of the German government, makes the intended purpose of his provocation even more obvious and irresponsible.

3. To illuminate even more thoroughly the previously given explanations for Henderson's conduct during his talk with Hitler on 29 August, one should call to mind the atmosphere in which the talk between Hitler and

Henderson had taken place the day before, on 28 August late in the evening. Henderson himself wrote of it as follows:

> "At 10.30, fortified by half a bottle of Champagne, I drove down the Wilhelmstrasse to the main entrance of the Reichskanzlei. A good many people were waiting outside the Embassy and a considerable crowd outside the Chancery. No hostility so far as I could see, absolute silence, possibly uneasiness.
>
> I was received by a guard of honour in full state as if I had been presenting my letters of credence. I was ushered in at once, Ribbentrop being in attendance and the inevitable Dr Schmidt. The Chancellor looked well, was absolutely calm and normal. No fireworks or tirades of any kind…
>
> Hitler registered no emotion on reading the German text [of the British note]...
>
> I am not unhopeful that Hitler's answer may not be too unreasonable...
>
> The general atmosphere was quite friendly even on Ribbentrop's part...
>
> Another point in my conversation was Hitler's insistence on the value to Britain of German friendship."[1354]

In the face of Hitler's composure, Henderson's behaviour on the evening of 29 August can only be described as irresponsible provocation, and it is irrelevant as to whether the British Ambassador was acting on his own accord, on the orders of his government, on the advice of the warmongers in London, or whether he was lending his ear to the whisperings of the German resistance members in the Foreign Office. It is worth observing that Henderson had no success with this, because Hitler "made no response" and "would not budge."

Collaboration between London and Warsaw from 29 to 31 August 1939

Whether it was Henderson, as is claimed in the "French Yellow Book" under No. 285 and No. 287, or another British or French diplomat, who passed on to Paris false information concerning Hitler's demands (all of the Corridor, East Upper Silesia) made during the talks with Henderson on 28 August, is an open question. All the same, this example also shows clearly, how foreign forces, just in the last days of peace, had been adding high-handedly, but with the encouragement and safeguarding from their government, to the powder keg for war.[1355]

Even more decisive, however, was to be the conduct of the British government. It fully backed their Ambassador Henderson in his talks with Hitler on 29 August. On top of this: The Foreign Office informed the French Ambassador in London, Charles Corbin, on 29 August, in an equally

inflammatory way, about the meeting between Hitler and Henderson on 28 August. The reason why this is not excusable is precisely because during this discussion Hitler never did give, and never could have given, a reply to the British note, since he had only just received it. There is also another reason making this inexcusable: In this communication to Corbin references were included which were deliberately warmongering:

> "After adding Silesia to his former claims, the Chancellor gave clearly to understand that what remained of Poland could not count upon an independent future...
>
> He let it be understood that he would negotiate with Poland only if he were sure in advance that the Polish Government would accede to all his wishes."[1356]

It is to be gathered from the *Documents on British Foreign Policy* that it was Henderson who sent the false information to London.[1357] Whether this is true must remain an open question. It is possible that Henderson had received secret instructions to act in such a way that the German-British talks, and consequently Germany's efforts about Poland, were bound to fail. All the same, Henderson did not report anything about these alleged demands from Hitler to his French counterpart in Berlin, Coulondre.[1358] The German documents of the Foreign Ministry, in any case, do not contain a single reference to these alleged demands from Hitler.[1359] These documents, in this instance, would merit all the more trust considering that they were published by the victors. Yet notwithstanding whose brainchild the claims about Hitler's alleged demands was ("all of the Corridor and East Upper Silesia"): Halifax was the one who went beyond this, spreading information with ever more aggravating emphasis, without any documentary proof whatsoever. Moreover, he knew that the Polish Foreign Minister was

> "…most anxious to know the upshot of Herr Hitler's remarks by midday [of 28 August]."[1360]

Besides, he knew that Beck had already taken "Hitler's language" as grounds for the Polish mobilisation.[1361] Chamberlain, likewise, spiced the communication to Paris with the purposeful reasoning:

> "The Führer cannot fail to realise the 'disgust' which has been provoked in the whole civilised world by the conclusion by Germany of an agreement with a Power, which, on the very day before this agreement, was regarded by Germany as her worst enemy." [1356]

Chamberlain did not ask to consider how much "disgust in the civilised world" the British and French political efforts over many months had aroused, which were to effect an expansionist military alliance with the

USSR directed against Central Europe. Such pangs of conscience the British leadership at the time did not suffer.

The attempt by Lord Halifax[1362] to play through to the end the deceitful manoeuvre with the British note to Hitler on 28 August and, for his part, to build in additional provocations, is demonstrated anew by this communication to Corbin,[1363] but also in his subsequent conduct: Notwithstanding the information about the already decreed Polish general mobilisation, which in the meantime had been transmitted confidentially to London, and notwithstanding that Hitler's reply of 29 August was in accordance with London's expectations from Berlin, *i.e.* the request for "immediate talks" – "the British government refused to be in a hurry."[1364]

Not once did they – not even at this stage – make the Polish consent for negotiations a condition for British assistance. Henderson outlined correctly the state of affairs, when he wrote to his Secretary of State on 29 August:

> "It is not without interest that, whereas every other diplomat has asked to see me, I have so far no sign of any interest whatsoever from the Polish Ambassador, though my relations with him personally are excellent."[1365]
>
> "If we allow the latter [Poland] to talk all the time of their '*amour propre*,' prestige and signs of weakening, we shall not be guiltless of some of the responsibility for disaster." [1354]

The British Ambassador in Warsaw, Kennard, on the other hand, was of the opinion:

> "... that it would be impossible to induce the Polish Government to send Colonel Beck or any other representative immediately to Berlin to discuss a settlement on the basis proposed by Herr Hitler. They would certainly sooner fight and perish rather than submit to such humiliation, especially after the examples of Czecho-Slovakia, Lithuania and Austria."[1366]

This point of view from Kennard did not at all refer to the short notice of the German proposal or its contents; he had, after all, told his Undersecretary of State, Cadogan, already on 26 August:

> "I am sorry that I cannot agree with Henderson's proposal that Lipski should seek an interview with Hitler...
>
> Had Lipski been able to see Weizsäcker, something might have been done, but for Lipski or Beck to seek an interview with Hitler or Ribbentrop would be too much like Canossa."[1367]

Kennard did not keep this opinion a secret from the Polish government officials.[1368] Furthermore, all throughout this decisive month, he never even once gave a strong warning to his government about Poland's mulish attitude. Yet he was as much aware as his U.S. colleague Biddle of the Polish fondness for war.[1369]

It is true, Kennard did occasionally convey Lord Halifax's repeated reminders that Poland was to conduct herself in such a way that she would not take up the position of an aggressor, as this could have a negative effect in world opinion,[1370] yet he thought it quite appropriate to try to convince his Foreign Secretary that Poland's action was right. Kennard also knew quite well that it was useful for Poland, who "saw her vital interests in Danzig threatened," to negotiate about an international guarantee protecting those interests. But with his stance he was reinforcing Beck's determination that, if officially invited to go "to Berlin, he would of course not go." [1368] Kennard was further aware how anxiously Minister for Foreign Affairs Beck was awaiting information on steps taken by London, as Polish policies would be governed in line with them,[1371] yet he spared every effort to exert pressure in the direction of a peaceable settlement.

True, Kennard did point out, after the announcement of the Polish general mobilisation on 29 August at 4.00 p.m.,

> "that the word 'mobilisation' would create the impression all over the world that we are embarking on war."[1372]

Yet in spite of this, he, as well as his French colleague, Noël, gave this piece of advice to the Polish Undersecretary of State, Count Szembek:

> "...Poland should take all military measures to meet any surprise attack, but we suggested, above all, that no publicity should be given to any extreme measures that they might feel it necessary to take."[1373]

One and a half hour later, Beck confirmed this 'wink' by telephone.[1374]

Lord Halifax limited his further activities on 29 August to recommending, without pressurising, a postponement of the Polish general mobilisation and was satisfied straight away with Colonel Beck's promise to delay the posting of mobilisation notices for "a few hours." For the rest, Halifax was supplying the Polish government constantly with "secret information from Germany," according to which German troops were well on the way to attack Poland from all sides.[1375] At 11.55 p.m. Halifax ordered his Ambassador in Warsaw to clarify that, although the German reply "does not appear to close every door," he could not "take the responsibility of advising the Polish Government against any action which they consider necessary for their security."[1376] With that statement, he thus condoned, already on the very same day, the Polish general mobilisation and was clearly contributing to furthering a warlike development.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Beck, complained to Kennard on the evening of 29 August – that is, at a time when Warsaw, because of the British delaying tactics, neither knew the contents of the German basis for negotiations nor the deadline limitation – not about the urgency behind the German readiness for talks, but merely that Hitler would not renounce Danzig. Beck adhered to the viewpoint that the resumption of talks with Germany on the basis of the proposals made in March still meant war. Should Hitler within the next few hours of this night [29-30 August] not give a "reply [that] was positively favourable" (that is, a definite disclaimer both of Danzig and of improving the transit regulations through the Corridor), then it would be necessary, so Beck warned the British and French Ambassadors, "to proceed with the general mobilisation."[1377] As this general mobilisation – especially in view of Poland's strategic aims – constituted a decisive step in the advancement to war, Beck's demand clearly clarifies the question of culpability. Considering that the Polish Ambassador in Berlin, Lipski, two days later called the German proposal "a sign of weakness,"[1378] how then would a German renunciation of Danzig have been evaluated on the Polish assessment scale?

Every sign of "German weakness" was seen by the Polish government as a "victory," while making sure, at the same time, that their own actions could not be regarded as a "sign of weakness."[1379] In the process, they would go to such lengths that many times they would even incur the displeasure of prudent British diplomats. In fact, the visit to Moscow by "the author of the anti-Comintern Pact," Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, and the signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact were described in the Polish press as "a sign of weakness" and showed, "how the ground burnt under Germany's feet."[1380] The Polish Ambassador in Moscow, too, was optimistic:

> "He is of the opinion that the German proposal and Ribbentrop's visit are evidence of the desperate situation in which the Reich presently finds itself."[1381]

For 29 August, there is another occurrence, slightly more removed, to be mentioned: While already previously the president of the World Jewish Congress, Goldmann, had told the League of Nations High Commissioner, Carl J. Buckhardt:

> "Your appeasement manoeuvres in Danzig are damaging. Public demonstrations against conditions in Danzig are necessary for the good of the whole, because of the general situation of

the Jewish people,"[1382]

so the Zionist leader and later president of Israel, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, wrote to the British Prime Minister, Chamberlain, on 29 August:

> "I wish to confirm, in the most explicit manner, the declarations which I and my colleagues have made, that the Jews stand by Great Britain and will fight on the side of the democracies.
>
> We therefore would place ourselves, in matters big and small, under the coordinating direction of His Majesty's Government. The Jewish Agency is ready to enter into immediate arrangements for utilising Jewish manpower, technical ability, resources, etc."[1383]

Hereby did a force, whose immense power certainly cannot be measured in divisions, announce their readiness to fight before the outbreak of war and, in fact, did so likewise without any reservations, that is, ignoring "the question of the aggressor" (This note from Weizmann was not made public until 5 September 1939).

In awareness of the new and, at the moment, still secret Polish measures, and in complete agreement of the Polish general mobilisation, the British Foreign Secretary did not – and this was bound to have a fateful effect! – inform the Polish government on 29 August about Germany's willingness for negotiations, but had this notification only passed on very late in the evening of 30 August. While Halifax was transmitting information to Warsaw about a German plan for advance, even as late as the evening of 29 August, so for 30 August, too, the motto remained the same: not to advise Poland "against any action which they consider necessary for their security."[1384] Having already delayed the forwarding of the German proposal for negotiation until 7.00 p.m. of 30 August, Halifax then ordered Kennard to place this information into Beck's hands only around midnight, *i.e.* to delay it again.[1385] In the course of this, he was to indicate that Great Britain considered the German presentation [of the case] as "indefensible and misleading," and "have made an express reservation in regard to statements of the particular demands put forward in the German note" [1385] (telegram from Halifax of 30 August, 7.00 p.m.; implemented around midnight).

The British government never pressed for the Polish government to negotiate, not until the evening of 30 August, after the Polish general mobilisation had already been announced since 2.30 p.m. Thus Poland could not send a plenipotentiary to Berlin on 30 August, at any rate not as a result of a British mediation effort. However, it has to be said in this connection that the British Ambassador, Henderson, even as late as the

night from 29 August to 30 August (shortly before midnight on 29 August), after the discussion with Ribbentrop, had called on the Polish Ambassador, Lipski, and had told him that Poland should send a plenipotentiary on 30 August. In this way the Polish government, therefore, had already been informed of Hitler's reply to Britain by midday of 30 August. But here, too, the British Ambassador was to encounter the increased hardening in Lipski's attitude:

> "The French, Americans and Italians have been on my doorstep since I got back, but not a sign from the Polish Ambassador, in spite of the fact that I am on quite good terms with him! Poland also has got to make her contribution to world peace, and it is in her interests more than anyone else's to remove as thoroughly as she can any possible causes for friction in the future between herself and her powerful neighbour."[1386]

The British government has suppressed in the "British Blue Book" this supplementary communication of 29 August from Henderson; not without reason! Likewise, in the "British Blue Book," they have deleted points 5, 6 and 7 from Henderson's report of 29 August to London:

> "5) I have communicated substance of German reply to French Ambassador and urged him strongly to recommend to French Government that they advise Polish Government to propose immediate visit of Mr Beck as constituting in my opinion sole chance now of preventing war. Herr Hitler is not bluffing, and at any moment clash may occur. I expressed opinion that Polish Government by so doing would not only convince the world that they had done their utmost but that, since others would suffer hardly less than themselves, it was their duty as well as in their interests to make this last attempt.
>
> 6) Italian Ambassador who saw Hitler immediately after me also came to see me. Herr Hitler was, he said, quite calm and gave him substance of German reply to His Majesty's Government. Italian Ambassador also undertook to suggest to Italian Government that they should make representations to Polish Government in similar sense.
>
> 7) I trust that His Majesty's Government will see their way to do likewise. Repeated to Paris, Rome and Warsaw."[1387] (cf. "British Blue Book" No. 80)

Apparently these suggestions did not fulfil the official British purpose, since London took no such step and even tried to hide the fact that her Ambassador was recommending taking just such a step. This should be proof, too, that the British government had neither done "the utmost," nor had they been guiding their partner toward doing "the utmost," in order for the world to be convinced of their desire for peace.

Likewise did the British government suppress the fact that Hitler had answered in the affirmative Henderson's question of whether he was ready to discuss with Poland "an exchange of populations," which was to have been exclusively to Germany's disadvantage.[1388]

This dishonest game was continued with regard to the British people and, yes indeed, the entire world: In the early hours of 30 August, at 2.00 a.m., Henderson received the instruction from Halifax to notify the Reich government that it was unreasonable to expect Great Britain to

> "produce a Polish representative in Berlin today, and the German Government must not expect this."[1389]

Initiatives of the German Government

A few hours later, Henderson sent a telegram to London, announcing that Birger Dahlerus – a Swedish industrialist, who, on German initiative, had been active as a German-British mediator already since July 1939 – was ready to fly to London, bypassing Ribbentrop, to discuss further possibilities for negotiation. Dahlerus, who had still been conferring with Göring during the night, was received by Chamberlain and Lord Halifax on 30 August in the morning. Leaving aside the renewed frontier incidents and other Polish provocations, Dahlerus expounded the essence of the German proposals.[1390] A telephone conversation with Göring during this talk confirmed the accuracy of the statements made by Dahlerus.

> "He [Göring] affirmed at once that the note was ready and that it offered Poland conditions still more favourable than those of which he had told me during the night."[1391]

Hitler's proposal was to be "in the form of a 'basis for discussion,'" but it was an absolute condition that a Polish negotiator vested with plenary powers was to receive them.[1392] The German documents confirm that Hitler did not wish to present Poland with an ultimatum but rather that he was considering for the negotiations to take place over a more extended period, since their most urgent point is named as being the cessation of the persecution of the Germans in Poland.[1393]

At 3.15 a.m. on 30 August, thus even before Dahlerus had arrived in London, Lord Halifax already knew that "30 August is not an absolutely unconditional date."[1394]

As a result of the discussion with Dahlerus, Lord Halifax advised the Polish government in the evening of 30 August (5.30 p.m.):

> "a) not to fire on fugitives or members of the German minority who cause trouble, but to arrest them;
> b) to abstain themselves from personal violence to members of German minority;
> c) to allow members of the German minority wishing to leave Poland to pass freely;

d) to stop inflammatory radio propaganda."

The reason given for this advice was the intention to deprive Hitler of the "pretext... to justify immoderate action."[1395]

Since Britain's written guarantee covered without reservation any Polish action of whatever nature, and since Halifax had stated on the previous day his essential approval of the Polish general mobilisation, one could hardly expect a change for the better to come from such a lukewarm recommendation as given on the evening of 30 August. The reaction from Beck was to be expected (30 August, 7.15 p.m.):

> "The Polish Foreign Minister… enjoins the British government to refrain from pronouncing its views and positions on purely Polish matters unless expressly empowered to do so by the Polish government. It is the most rude standpoint of sovereignty and of a [self-perceived] great power. The evaluation of Polish questions is the sole and exclusive decision of the Polish government."[1396]

Poland's position now was much more rigid than in March 1939, before the British guarantee. If, over the five months from October 1938 to March 1939, she had shown readiness to negotiate, now she no longer needed "fear negotiations,"[1397] even less so, since the Polish military leadership was convinced of their forces' superiority over the Wehrmacht. Even with his allies, Beck kept his cards close to his chest. [1397]

> "The Polish government…, cold, haughty, rigid and fatalistic…, had been… tight-lipped for four months, only answering all urging from the Western Allies with empty promises. To them – fools of mad-cap heroism – the others are fools of faint-heartedness. Even on the eve of war, the British government is still not clear, whether the Polish government's support for their negotiation effort is only somewhat feigned."[1398]

On 30 August the British government had further aggravated the situation by not informing the Polish government of the German readiness for negotiations until the late hour of around 12 o'clock midnight. Poland, for her part, used the 30 August for worsening the situation by announcing in the afternoon general mobilisation, which had been decreed the day before, and by stopping rail services to East Prussia at first in parts, then on 31 August stopping it completely by blowing up the bridge at Dirschau.[1399]

On 30 August at approximately 12 o'clock midnight – 10 hours after the public announcement and 34 hours after the secretly decreed general mobilisation by Poland – Henderson presented to the Reich Foreign Minister a memorandum from the British government, which stated that while the German government "must obviously…with all urgency" endeavour direct talks with Warsaw "it would be impracticable to establish

contact so early as today."[1400] By this move it was indicated to Hitler that the British government, contrary to their assurance, was not at all making any attempt at mediation, had not even impelled Poland to the negotiation table, and was not able to suggest avenues of how the German government might move Poland to initiate a discussion, a country that, since March 1939, had considered any German approach for negotiations as a threat of war. Lord Halifax even rejected the German suggestion that he might advise Poland to send a representative for immediate German-Polish negotiations. [1400] With emphasis, but without an explanation, Halifax had instructed Henderson to schedule the meeting only for this late hour, although the details of the intended move had already been with the embassy in Berlin since 7.40 p.m. [1400]

In his reply, Ribbentrop read aloud to the British Ambassador the German negotiation proposals intended for Poland. He was later criticised for not having handed over the proposals in written form, having only conveyed them "at top speed" and unintelligibly. One cannot fabricate a case of wrongdoing from this oral presentation, though. The Minister Plenipotentiary and chief interpreter, Dr. Paul Schmidt, disputed the claim that Ribbentrop had been reading too fast and indistinctly.[1401] For the rest, there is the memorandum of Minister Plenipotentiary Schmidt in the German documents;[1402] it is stated therein that Ribbentrop "had read... slowly and clearly, and had even given explanations on the main points."

The proposals were ready. Their content matter had been known to the British government since the morning of 30 August (cf. Dahlerus's talks in London). Hitler, though, had declined handing over these proposals in writing, since he wished to present them first to the Polish government as the actual negotiations partner; as Great Britain had up to now not been making any attempts at mediation, she could hardly expect to be given them beforehand. For the rest, had not Great Britain just this very moment given to understand that London is *not* prepared to mediate, even at this stage? The Foreign Office was displaying no sign of urgency during these last days. Just then, Henderson had conveyed during the same discussion his government's view as set down in a memorandum that "it would be impracticable to establish contact as early as today" between Germany and Poland.

It was known everywhere, just how sensitive Poland's reactions were particularly in regards to the question of her sovereignty. For this reason alone, Hitler could hardly have passed over the German proposals to British hands. Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop later wrote about this:

> "The British government, it is true, had undertaken to use its good offices to effect such negotiations, not, however, to take the place of a Polish plenipotentiary…
>
> …that an official handing over of a document that was meant for a Polish negotiator – yet before having been received by the government addressed herewith – could have provided the pretext for not sending a Polish emissary and to cover the sequence of events for the Polish general mobilisation, with regard to time, 'in the undergrowth of delaying tactics.'"[1403]

The proposal for negotiations to be discussed, as drafted on 30 August by the Reich government, contained the following points:

a. The return of Danzig to the Reich ("Nobody in Poland denies that Danzig is a German city from a national standpoint").[1404]
b. A plebiscite on the affiliation of the Corridor territory (West Prussia), under international control, not before a period of twelve months. If, as a result of this vote, the Corridor were to return to the Reich, then Poland would receive the harbour of Gdingen and an extra-territorial road through West Prussia. If, on the other hand, the population of the Corridor voted in favour of Poland, then the Reich would claim the right to an extra-territorial road to East Prussia.
c. A guarantee of non-aggression extended to a period of 25 years, indeed, a guarantee of the Polish state and thus of Poland's frontiers in general.

The proposal, or rather claim, thus put by Hitler did neither contain the re-integration of the province of Posen nor the valuable industrial areas of Eastern Upper Silesia, arbitrarily and unlawfully detached from the Reich in 1921, nor any other rectification.

Furthermore, such rectification demands have never been brought into any talks held by the German leadership, but this did not stop French or British diplomats or other forces, remaining anonymous, from including such false reports as "authentic documents" in the "French Yellow Book," or to spread the rumours from London.[1405] The German proposal, a "veritable League of Nations proposal,"[1406] was based on the people's right of self-determination and, in respect to these two former German provinces, it even relinquished the application of this principle. The extent of the area involved in Hitler's proposal amounted to only one-tenth of the region that

was appropriated unlawfully by Poland in 1919. That this eleventh-hour proposal had been an extremely generous one was realised by each and every expert in 1939 as well. It did not require historians to discover this and to make a comparison with the claims advanced by the Weimar democrats. In no way could this proposal be regarded, from a Polish point of view, as inferior to the plan which initially had even been discussed by Colonel Beck for five months, since Poland – after many years of ethnically cleansing out the German minority – was expecting a plebiscite victory in the disputed territory, or rather, was propagating this belief in victory.

Shortly before his conversation with Ribbentrop, Henderson wrote to his Foreign Secretary, warning him:

> "If there is to be any genuine peace in future between Poland and her powerful neighbour grievances of latter which are not of Herr Hitler's making but national [in nature] must be eliminated. In my opinion in order to achieve this end City of Danzig as distinct from port must revert to Germany; there must be direct and extra-territorial communication between Reich and East Prussia; and German minority in Poland must be got rid of by means of some exchange of population. On no other basis can there ever be genuine and lasting peace between the two countries. No diplomatic compromise has a hope of surviving indefinitely.
>
> If we are ever to get German army and nation to revolt against the intolerable government of Herr Hitler it can only be so far as Poland is concerned on some such basis, since whole of nation itself and even most of moderate sections of it would not regard any other basis as fair to Germany…
>
> In the meantime I can only urge once more importance of Poland accepting at once proposal for direct negotiations and thereby putting herself right in the eyes of the world."[1407]

Having only just written that Hitler "would refuse such a basis," Henderson must have been rather surprised in his talk with Ribbentrop that the German proposal contained precisely that which he himself had outlined as being the German minimum demands. Hitler, after all, did accept this "basis," and Henderson even described, straight after the meeting with the Reich Foreign Minister, the German offer as "not unreasonable."

The Lethargic Polish Ambassador

That Henderson had understood and had also retained the gist of the contents follows from the fact that in the early hours of 31 August, at 2.00 a.m., he informed his Polish counterpart, Lipski, of the basic outlines of the German proposal and recommended, "in the very strongest terms," a discussion between Rydz-Śmigły and Göring, but also direct contact with Ribbentrop. Lipski, for his part, should at least make an attempt for the

preservation of peace and to sound out the Reich Foreign Minister on the possibilities for negotiations. But in vain! In a note to London he gave vent to his exasperation:

> "The German proposals certainly do not endanger the independence of Poland... The German acceptance of a plebiscite in the Corridor is curious...
>
> The Poles must put themselves in the right by making a gesture of some kind, or else we must all fight."[1408]

Henderson reported on the talk with Lipski:

> "I then gave him following advice in very strongest terms. He should at once ring up Minister for Foreign Affairs and say he had heard from me that detailed proposals had been individually elaborated and that he would like to call on Herr von Ribbentrop with a view to learning and communicating them immediately to Polish Government. I suggested he should do this tonight on his own responsibility."[1409]

Lipski, however, did nothing at all, as Henderson reports:

> "Polish Ambassador promised to telephone at once to his Government, but he is so inert or so handicapped by instructions of his Government that I cannot rely on his action being an effective palliative." [1409]

At 5.15 a.m. on 31 August, Henderson sent a telegram with the main points of the German proposal to London (received at 9.30 a.m.). [1409] In the meantime the Swedish intermediary Dahlerus had, in the early hours of 31 August at between 1.00-2.00 a.m., passed on by telephone the contents of the German proposal to the Councillor of the British embassy, Ogilvie-Forbes. At 8.00 a.m. Henderson gave Polish Legation Secretary Malhomme the complete text of the German proposal. Warsaw received it at 10.55 a.m. on 31 August.

By 9.05 a.m. Henderson knew with certainty that the time period had been extended from 30 August to 31 August, as he was now informing his French colleague Coulondre of this news. But in the meantime he had learned from Göring via an intermediary that it would even be enough if Lipski could declare, within this extension, "that a negotiator will be sent shortly."[1410]

At 11.00 a.m. in the morning of 31 August, Birger Dahlerus, accompanied by the Councillor of the British embassy, Ogilvie-Forbes, went to see the Polish Ambassador, Lipski. Dahlerus wrote of this meeting:

> "Upon arrival one already sensed very strongly the gravity of the situation. Boxes were lined up in the hall, and everywhere the personnel were busy preparing for departure. Lipski received us in his office, from which part of the furnishings had already been removed…
>
> Forbes… asked me to read the German note addressed to Poland, and I did so. But Lipski soon said that he was unable to understand the contents. Forbes then put down the main points himself

and handed the note to Lipski, who took the paper, hands shaking, and looked at it for a moment – but then stated that he could not understand what was written, whereupon I offered to dictate the note immediately to his secretary…

While I was dictating to the secretary, Lipski had told Forbes that he had no reason to interest himself in any notes or offers from the Germans. He had had many years of experience of Germany… he stated his conviction that unrest would break out in this country in the event of war and that the Polish army would march triumphantly on Berlin."[1411]

Lipski described the German proposals offhandedly as "a sign of weakness."[1412] Polish leading circles were ridiculing the German readiness for negotiations, and it was not only Warsaw radio that expressed such an attitude.[1413] Lukasiewicz in Paris:

"They [the German proposals] are so immoderate that the German government must have gone mad, or else is now pursuing an out-and-out provocation to goad the Polish government."[1414]

Such a misinterpretation of Germany's willingness to negotiate embodied the very opposite of a peaceable attitude. Even Lord Halifax voiced his irritation – albeit too late – on 1 September:

"On the other hand, I do not see why the Polish Government should feel difficulty about authorising Polish Ambassador to accept a document from the German Government, and I earnestly hope that they may be able to modify their instructions to him in this respect. There was no mention of any ultimatum in the report on the German proposals which has been furnished to us, and the suggestion that the demand for the presence of a Polish plenipotentiary at Berlin on August 30 amounted to an ultimatum was vigorously repudiated by Herr von Ribbentrop in conversation with His Majesty's Ambassador. If the document did contain an ultimatum, the Polish Government would naturally refuse to discuss it until the ultimatum was withdrawn. On the other hand, a refusal by them to receive proposals would be gravely misunderstood by outside opinion.

I should have thought that the Polish Ambassador could surely be instructed to receive and transmit a document and to say

(a) if it contained anything like an ultimatum, that he anticipated that the Polish Government would certainly be unable to discuss on such a basis, and

(b) that, in any case, in the view of the Polish Government, questions as to the venue of the negotiations, the basis on which they should be held, and the persons to take part in them, must be discussed and decided between the two Governments."[1415]

The "Line" of Lord Halifax

Of course it seems reasonable to suspect that Halifax did not mean what he had said there, because 24 hours earlier he had passed on to the Polish government Hitler's basis for negotiations from 29 August only in the early hours of 31 August, subject to numerous provisos,[1416] by which he practically invited Poland's refusal. In this telegram to his Ambassador in Warsaw (30 August – 7.00 p.m., implemented in the early hours of 31 August) Halifax admitted "the line we have taken," regarding it as

important that Minister for Foreign Affairs, Beck, "will see the line."[1417] This is to be understood in the light of the delay in the passing on of the German proposal and London's provisos regarding the contents, but no less in the deceitful conduct of the British Foreign Secretary since 25 or rather 28 August, with the unreserved approval of the Polish general mobilisation included. To make his purpose still clearer for the Polish Foreign Minister, he added that he recommended discussions in view of "the internal situation in Germany and of world opinion."

> "So long as the German Government profess themselves ready to negotiate, no opportunity should be given them for placing the blame for a conflict on Poland." [1417]

After the delay mentioned, *i.e.* from the evening of 29 August to the early hours on 31 August, Halifax told the Poles that the German proposals did not constitute "an ultimatum," although having just previously for precisely those reasons refused to advise the Polish government in good time (24 hours after the Polish general mobilisation!) that she should send an emissary with full powers to Berlin.

Colonel Beck confirmed right away, early in the morning of 31 August, that he had taken cognisance of "the line" taken by London. He seemed "greatly relieved," as Ambassador Kennard reported:

> "…and he [Beck] fully realised the main importance which His Majesty's Government attaches to the necessity of not giving the German Government any opportunity for placing the blame on Poland in any refusal to enter into direct negotiations."[1418]

At 11.00 a.m. on 31 August, the Italian Ambassador in Berlin, Attolico, and the head of the Italian government, Mussolini, were taking action independently of one another. Both of them advised London

a. that Lord Halifax must press the Polish government, for war to be avoided, to authorise Ambassador Lipski to hold negotiations with the German government;
b. that an international conference should be convened for 5 September

> "with the object of examining the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles which are the cause of present disturbance in the life of Europe."[1419]

Mussolini decided to put this suggestion to Hitler only after obtaining the British and French assent to this.

No light has been shed upon the reason why State Secretary von Weizsäcker, who was informed of it by Attolico, did not pass on this

proposal. In this way, as well as for the reason that the French Prime Minister Daladier called for

> "convening the conference only after direct talks between Germany and Poland had failed,"[1420]

neither Hitler nor Ribbentrop heard about these suggestions on 31 August, but only on 2 September in the morning.[1421] On 2 September, in the afternoon, Hitler accepted the plan of a general conference and the suspension of German military operations in Poland and agreed to have proposals for it completed within 24 hours.[1422] Hitler's willingness to use the mediator Dahlerus to the last and to send even on 3 September, *i.e.* within the running-time of the British ultimatum to Germany, Göring with full powers to London, is proof that he must have accepted Mussolini's suggestion for a ceasefire conference for 5 September.

At 12.50 p.m. on 31 August, Chamberlain's first reaction was already (hardly two hours after Mussolini's suggestion) to refuse, "under the threat of mobilised armies,"[1423] to agree to such a conference. In the afternoon of 31 August, Chamberlain "now was much less in a hurry."[1424] He was not to change his mind again. Britain, while not accepting Mussolini's proposal, stipulated, after the outbreak of war, the unrealistic precondition of immediately withdrawing the German forces from Poland, before a conference could be contemplated. This was tantamount to a refusal, particularly, since even in the event of this happening, no improved likelihood for negotiations, compared to the conditions on 31 August, was proffered. Such a withdrawal was also impossible to implement, as a full-blown genocide of the German ethnic minority in Poland had been unleashed by a Polish mob at the outbreak of war, which could only be stopped by German military forces pacifying Poland by force.

In addition, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, on 2 September at 2.47 a.m., likewise rejected the plan for a conference.[1425]

When passing judgment on these series of events, it should be remembered that British politics in the year 1939 had been focused on actually creating, in the first place, a "threat of mobilised armies" – courtesy of President Roosevelt's "methods short of war,"[1426] which had been advocated and adopted by him since January 1939. A conference, even with these preconditions not evoked by Hitler – since spring 1939 Poland had begun this unfounded mobilisation! – would have been a far greater act

of peace than to refuse all negotiations and consequently accept a military conflict. Hitler, for his part, had not refused to negotiate, even with the already months-long "threat of mobilised armies," namely of the Polish as well as the French!

But back to the events in Berlin, London and Warsaw on 31 August.

Both the British and Polish government were, in the morning of 31 August, in possession of the German proposals (London had received them 24 hours earlier than Warsaw), and had knowledge, or rather, should have had knowledge, of the extension for the negotiations. The two governments, however, did nothing to ease the tension, making no effort for talks or a further extension of the deadline. The British government neither reproached Warsaw for provocations against the Germans ethnic minority, nor for actions against Danzig, nor for further territorial demands made for East Prussia and the Oder regions as voiced by Polish public opinion, nor for rejecting all negotiations, nor for the general mobilisation, and, therefore, did indeed "ignore the question of the aggressor." In addition, British government members were, in their policy regarding the press, adopting a deliberately war-promoting stance, particularly on this 31 August, spreading news they knew to be lies. Thus, *The Daily Telegraph* of 31 August carried – how else but on official instruction? – the false report that

a. Poland's general mobilisation was only a consequence of "demands from Hitler for territorial claims" or rather "of the newly put forward demands from Hitler";
b. the British government had immediately passed on to Warsaw Hitler's reply of 29 August;
c. Great Britain had sent to Hitler, with all possible speed on 30 August, a note by "a special courier by plane";
d. the German Army commanders in the border regions had been given special powers.

Not one of these accounts was true, but they were all calculated so as to provoke agitation and to demonstrate anew, especially to the Poles, the position of the British leadership. What followed was the unusual step of censorship in a country with a "free" press: this issue of *The Daily Telegraph* was confiscated by the British government before it could be sent out, and replaced with a version which was even worse:

"When the British government realised the inherent dangers of this publication, they arranged for this issue to be withdrawn. In the revised edition, the statements on German military measures take up three quarters of the article, the reports on how Henderson had been received and the Cabinet debates are missing, and the following untrue news item is repeated:

'After receiving a communication from London that indicated the kind of newly put forward demands from Hitler, the Polish government announced extraordinary defence measures.'"[1427]

At the same time (31 August, midday), Sir Horace Wilson at the Foreign Office was refusing to give Dahlerus the opportunity – as had been approved by Henderson – to get in touch with London on the embassy line of the British embassy in Berlin. When Dahlerus related Lipski's refusal to take cognisance of the German willingness for negotiations or the German proposals, and when he stressed the direct consequences this mulish stubbornness would have on the peace in Europe and then suggested that London influence Poland, Wilson put down the receiver with the words "shut up!"[1428] The pretext that German intelligence might be listening in was without any foundation, given the topic of the conversation and the neutral position of Dahlerus as mediator. For Lipski's stance was bound to become known to the Reich government via a different route anyway. On the other hand, to break off a conversation so abruptly – especially if one suspects that German security services were listening in – was apt to confirm the leadership of the Reich in the conviction that in reality London does not want talks. But even given the case of no Germans listening in, the putting down of the receiver on this neutral mediator while talking was bound to give the clear signal that Britain did not want mediation.

The mediator Dahlerus had not been impeded or doomed to failure in his mission by Hitler or Göring, but rather by the British government that – reiterating the words of Halifax – "since the conclusion of the German-Soviet agreement" of 23 August was no longer willing "to patch matters up."[1429]

August the 31st was the day when Lord Halifax sanctioned Beck's "standing firm" and his decision, not to expose Lipski to "extreme pressure and blackmail" in Berlin, but, at the same time, was reprimanding Henderson for having taken matters into his own hands, when he, once again, had been putting Lipski under pressure through Dahlerus.[1430]

August the 31st was the day when the Polish government, as Beck told French Ambassador Noël, arrived at the decision that as

"we are in the thick of war; it was time not to talk of conferences but of mutual aid in resistance to aggression."[1431]

This was the basic position in Warsaw, to label Germany that had not acted aggressively toward Poland as the "aggressor," so as to use this pretext to become militarily active while banking on foreign support. Göring's Research Department picked up at 12.40 p.m. an enciphered telegram from Warsaw to Lipski in Berlin, the gist of which was that the Ambassador was to seek an interview with Ribbentrop, but under no circumstances was to get involved in pertinent talks. That this telegraphic directive, which is withheld from the "Polish White Book," is authentic, might be demonstrated by the following:

1. Lipski's attitude during the subsequent talk with Ribbentrop at 6.30 p.m.[1432] was in conformity with the telegram, and he had not been provided with plenary powers.
2. Beck told Kennard in Warsaw on 31 August that Lipski would not be authorised to negotiate in Berlin.[1433]
3. Poland has never rejected this account in the "German White Book" and neither has Lipski himself.
4. In direct correlation with this note stood the arrival in Warsaw of Prince Lubomirski, sent by Lipski as a kind of special courier. This Councillor of embassy arrived in Warsaw before noon on 31 August.[1434] Apparently, basing it on this initiative, Lipski was still too active for the liking of his Minister for Foreign Affairs.
5. For a man such as Beck, for whom we already "are in the thick of war," [1431] this telegram, which practically revoked the ambassadorial powers of his representative in Berlin, was merely logically consistent.

Field Marshal Göring showed the text of the Polish telegram to Dahlerus and asked him to convey the information immediately to the British Ambassador, Henderson, which meant that he was voluntarily divulging that the Polish secret code was known to Germany.

> "Göring wanted to avoid war if this were at all possible… He liked to act as the mouthpiece of the German generals, themselves fearful of war; and maybe, as the supposed director of German economics, he grasped that Germany was not prepared to face a general war. The German approaches to both Soviet Russia and Great Britain came from economic experts – striking proof that the Second World war did not have [German] economic causes."[1435]

While London let also pass by the afternoon of 31 August unexploited, the Polish Ambassador, Lipski, in accordance with the instruction sent from Warsaw at 12.40 p.m., asked to be received for talks with Ribbentrop. The

Reich Foreign Minister did check back, first of all, whether Lipski wanted to see him "as a special plenipotentiary or in some other capacity."[1436]

> "This was a clear sign and offered a new chance to the Polish government: now they did not have to send a negotiator but merely give 'special authority' to Lipski so as to yet bring about direct talks at the eleventh hour.
>
> Lipski understood the significance of this query, because at 3.15 p.m. he had the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs informed by telegram and communicated to him that he personally had replied 'that he was asking for an interview in his capacity of Ambassador to remit a communication from his government.' So now it was up to Beck to extend this 'communication' in the sense that Lipski could act as special plenipotentiary!
>
> Ribbentrop took advantage of this opportunity also. So as to allow time for the Polish government to make suchlike arrangements, he set the appointment for the Polish Ambassador to come to the Foreign Ministry not before 6.30 p.m."[1437]

Beck, however, did not respond. Thus, the Polish Ambassador presented himself at 6.30 p.m. – as mentioned before – without plenary powers. He also refused, in accordance with his instructions from Warsaw, to engage in pertinent talks, stating that he "had no direct information on the subject," and that he could not accept any proposals. Even on the evening of 31 August, Beck still considered himself "apparently neither asked nor requested."[1438] Even for the British government the Poles were going too far this time; they regarded the position of the Reich government – at least to a certain degree – as justified, as is clearly shown in the already mentioned telegram sent during the night by Halifax to Kennard.[1439]

At 6.40 p.m., after the talks between Ribbentrop and Lipski had come to nothing[1440] – not already at 12.40 p.m. or 4.20 p.m., as many historians have claimed by copying from one another without giving any references[1441] – Hitler issued the order to begin operations on 1 September 1939 at 4.45 a.m. For him it was a question of making use of the few hours that were possibly still left for the German armed forces – after more than 48 hours since the Polish general mobilisation – to forestall an evidently impending Polish attack that, as must have been suspected in Berlin, could well have been aligned with a French advance, and to guard against the military disadvantages arising from such a war on two fronts.

At 9.15 p.m. of 31 August, the German radio broadcast to the world Hitler's offer. Hereby Berlin once more gave the Polish government an opportunity to reconsider. But at 11.00 p.m., the Polish Broadcasting Service at Warsaw called it instead an "impudent proposal," rejected each and every negotiation, found words of derision to describe the waiting in vain of the "new Huns," and declared that Poland's reply could only be in

military terms and, anyway, Poland's answer to the German willingness to negotiate from the days before had already been "given" by way of "the military orders."[1442] This broadcast was done at a time when the Polish government did not yet know of Hitler's order to attack Poland, but already for days they admittedly have had information about the German willingness to negotiate and about the extremely tense situation. The Polish decision for war is, therefore, proven also with this declaration of war via the radio. Poland decided on war at a time, when Hitler was still attempting to resolve the biggest territorial violation of the law of the Versailles dictate without bloodshed, with a fair compromise and, in fact, with territorial renunciations of a magnanimity which no government of the Weimar Republic had ever been willing to make. Hitler had not attached any deadline or any ultimatum to his upheld claim for Danzig and an extra-territorial transit way into East Prussia. It is true that since April 1939 the Reich Chancellor had set the date of completion for "Operation White," *i.e.* the military planning against Poland, to be 1 September 1939 at the latest, but he did not link this operative plan to any definite offensive purpose or to an aggressive order against Poland. This plan had been worked out, in accordance with orders, on the presupposition that Poland might "adopt a threatening attitude toward the Reich" and with the objective, "in case of need, to eliminate any threat from this direction."[1443] Whereas Hitler – as already described –was making numerous minor "diplomatic retreats" [1443] during the summer months in 1939, the wave of oppression and persecution of the German ethnic minority welled up to such a degree – as even the resistance member von Weizsäcker stated – that it submerged the original problem: Danzig and the passage through the Corridor. [1443] The ever-worsening crisis leading up to this date –1 September 1939 – did not originate from Hitler's actions, as can be proved, but rather from the initiatives on the part of Poland and Britain. It was these two countries which in August 1939 left the leadership of the Reich with the only alternative of either choosing between humiliation beyond all reasonable demand – also in the form of relinquishment of Danzig for all times and the violent expulsion of the rest of the German ethnic minority from former German territories in Poland – or the struggle for Germany's rights to exist.

The Polish General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, Minister without portfolio in the Cabinet in exile, revealed on 31 August 1943 to Allied media

representatives:

> "Poland's decision on 30 August 1939, which was based on the decree for general mobilisation, marks a turning point in the history of Europe. Hitler was now confronted with the inevitability to wage war at a time when he was hoping to achieve further victories without bloodshed."[1444]

It cannot be a punishable crime to attempt to win bloodless victories in the political sphere – to say nothing when it concerns the re-establishment of the law according to the principle of self-determination – and neither can it be a question, in this specific case, of it being Hitler's irrevocable determination to a bloodless "victory" in the height of summer in 1939. After all, the Polish question had not been exacerbated by him:

> "Hitler contributed little to the course of diplomacy between April and August 1939."[1445]

General Sosnkowski and the Polish government were fully aware that Hitler did not wish to go to war over the Polish question. Therefore, the creation of "necessities" was undertaken, which would force him into war. That it was not the "fear of a strongly armed Germany," but, on the contrary, rather a misplaced belief in a rapid internal collapse of Germany, which was the guiding notion – principally in Warsaw, London and Washington – requires no detailed proof, since all documents testify to this. The British Ambassador in Berlin was also aware of these facts:

> "It is a horrible thought to think that Polish readiness to negotiate may save the [National Socialist] régime. If one considered only oneself, one would say 'Don't lift a finger but just see the whole thing through.' But it is a terrible responsibility."[1446]

When Hitler issued the attack order against Poland at 6.40 p.m. on 31 August, to be carried out 4.45 a.m. on 1 September, he still wanted to keep open the channel of a British mediation:

> "In the statement about the 16-point proposal that was broadcast over the [German] radio, it did not say that the German proposals had lapsed owing to the non-arrival of the Polish negotiator within the time limit set for the day before, but it says that 'under these circumstances,' meaning all those as described in the statement, as well as the negating attitude of the Polish Ambassador in the afternoon, the German government cannot but regard their proposals as having been virtually rejected, which was then, of course, confirmed by the Polish reply at 11.00 p.m."[1447]

The German press was instructed not to talk of "war," but rather about "shooting back." What is more, everything was being done to confine the conflict, once broken out, to Poland. On 1 September at 9.50 a.m., or rather at 10.45 a.m., the British government was again informed by the Swedish mediator, Dahlerus, that

a. Field Marshal Göring had received orders, in view of the Dirschau bridge having been blown up, resulting in an unavoidable suspension of the transit route through Poland into East Prussia, and in view of the fighting having taken place in the Danzig area the day before (31 August), to drive back the Polish army from the border region and to destroy the Polish Air Force along the frontier.
b. Poland's refusal to negotiate with Germany was seen by the government of the Reich as proof that single-handedly nothing else could be done on their part.
c. He, Dahlerus, had

"arranged with permission of the Führer a very friendly discussion with the British Ambassador and the Polish Ambassador."[1448]

These pieces of information were opening up once more possibilities to intervene. [1448] Notably absent here was any mentioning of the "destruction of Poland," but instead mention is made only of the border area, of the hopeless situation, as it was regarded in Germany, and of the intention to bring about negotiations. While, for this reason, no steps were taken on the German side that would cause the Polish Ambassador, Lipski, to leave Berlin, so that, indeed, he remained in the capital of the Reich for several more days after 1 September,[1449] Halifax replied to the mediation and discussion proposals, which had just been put forward by Dahlerus, five hours later (1 September at 4.45 p.m.) with a "warning" to Hitler. The next stage would be, if the German reply was unsatisfactory, and if the German troops were not promptly withdrawn from Polish territory, an ultimatum with a time limit or an immediate declaration of war. In this communication the British government made no mention of openings for negotiations in case of German compliance.

During his entire period in office, Hitler had never taken any action that was directed against British vital interests – unless, of course, the unification and strengthening of Germany was interpreted in London as a "violation of British vital interests." Great Britain, on the other hand, had done everything to meddle in affairs which did not at all affect her interests. They went so far as to announce Germany's annihilation, when Germany was no longer going to be humiliated by Poland, when Germany was no longer going to put up with Danzig being starved out, when Germany was no longer going to watch its ethnic minority in Poland being terrorised and

ethnically cleansed, and when the Reich government was not going to wait until the first Polish military blow was struck, which was to be expected at any moment, with greedy Polish eyes set on Berlin, Danzig and East Prussia, which, considering the experiences of the First World War, would be synchronised with the advance of the French army, or so the German Army would have assumed.

Neville Chamberlain did, once again, deliberately misinform the House of Commons on 1 September, when he stated:

> "We never got a copy of those proposals [Hitler's from 30 August] and the first time we heard them – we heard them – was on the broadcast last night."[1450]

It was just as misleading, when he asserted that Ribbentrop had read these proposals to the British Ambassador "at top speed" – meaning unintelligibly – and had "proved" with this that they were not at all meant to be taken seriously. This speech by Chamberlain, which once again contained thus (compare his speech of 25 August) deliberate distortions, did not only expose the real power structures within British democracy, revealing that the people were not consulted on matters of vital importance to their existence, and in fact were not even given correct information, but it also exposed London's policy hostile toward peace. Because – as stated above – honesty is a precondition for a policy of peace! But the British government was not honest in the last days of peace:

1. They did, without having been unconditionally authorised by Poland, dupe Hitler about Polish willingness to negotiate and the British desire to mediate, asking the Reich Chancellor to draw up his basis for discussions. But Halifax, in fact, was not taking any action commensurate with an intermediary. Indeed, he was fully cognisant "that Polish Government have not looked with favour on the possibility of mediation" (this referred to the Roosevelt message of 25 August 1939),[1451] yet, nevertheless, he extended on this 25 August the unconditional guarantee to this Poland in a war-mood, in accordance with his determination that "any attempt to patch matters up had been out of the question since the conclusion of the German-Soviet agreement."[1452]
2. As can now be proved, Halifax fabricated on 28 August a Polish assurance of readiness to negotiate, he deceived his Ambassador, Henderson, and he added to his subterfuge manoeuvre concerning

the Note to Hitler of 28 August so much explosive matter by way of giving false news accounts to diplomats and the press that he had made it impossible thereby to reach a peaceable settlement.

3. At the same time, Halifax was sending alarming messages to the Polish government without, however, informing them in good time of the steps they had taken in Berlin and of Hitler's reaction. He thought it more important that the Poles should perceive his guiding principle, *i.e.* his "line."
4. London did not protest about the Polish general mobilisation, which had to be attributed in part to the Halifaxian alarmist news from the day before.
5. Lord Halifax violated his own preconditions which he had conveyed to Hitler two days before (28 August) when he did not, for one single moment, take any action whatsoever as intermediary, not even at this point or beyond.
6. The British government thwarted Hitler's expectation of a Polish plenipotentiary by delaying, from the evening of 29 August to the early hours of the morning on 31 August, and they made so many provisos in the communication eventually transmitted to Warsaw that they were thereby provoking a rejection from Poland. They frustrated, thereby, a direct German-Polish contact that they themselves had recommended from becoming realised, and they made insoluble the – blown out of all proportions – "question of procedure," *i.e.* how should the German proposals be imparted to the Polish government. The British government, therefore, was using these three days from 28-31 August for advancing the war, while simultaneously keeping Hitler in the belief that they were continuing with intensive mediation efforts.
7. Lord Halifax also made use, during the last discussions between Hitler and Henderson, of unproved rumours according to which Germans were committing acts of sabotage in Poland. In this way he deliberately set out to also aggravate these last talks.
8. Chamberlain and Halifax – to mention just the men responsible – misled and incited the House of Commons and world opinion on many particulars.[1453]

This stance cannot be explained by saying that London took their bearings from Italy's secret affirmation to stay out of a war (18 August and 1 September 1939), as well as from the information supplied by German resistance members, according to whom the majority of the German people was against Hitler, requiring only a display of firm language from the British government to bring about a putsch within the Reich.[1454] But the pushing for conflict by the conductors of "public opinion" in Britain and the USA, as well as that of the advisers in the Foreign Office, but also the position and ultimate objective of the British government, had been decided before these pieces of information were known. Concerning the atmosphere in London during the last days of peace, there is a range of documents produced for the historian to see. Here are just a few:

Chamberlain in a private letter to his sister of 10 September 1939:

> "The final long drawn-out agonies that preceded the actual declaration of war were as nearly unendurable as could be. We were anxious to bring things to a head, but there were three complications – the secret communications that were going on with Göring and Hitler through a neutral intermediary, the conference proposal of Mussolini, and the French anxiety to postpone the actual declaration as long as possible, until they could evacuate their women and children, and mobilise their armies. There was very little of this that we could say in public."[1455]

The Polish Ambassador, Raczynski, wrote:

> "Later that evening [2 September 1939] Duncan Sandys came to see me at the Embassy. He told me that he, Churchill and their friends would not give way and that they could count not only on moral support from the Labour Party, but on a large section of the Conservatives. All were resolved not to capitulate, and if Chamberlain were to weaken once again, he would be overthrown."[1456]

Sir Horace Wilson, Chamberlain's closest collaborator, on 2 September 1939 to the press councillor of the German embassy in London, Dr. Fritz Hesse:

> "England is resolved upon war, and is no longer keen on a compromise."[1457]

That was the reply to a compromise request, which the Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop had transmitted by telephone on 2 September to the press councillor of the German embassy in London:

> "The Führer is prepared to withdraw from Poland and to offer compensation for damage done thus far, on the condition that we get Danzig and the road through the Corridor, provided Britain takes on the role of mediator in the German-Polish conflict. You are authorised by the Führer to submit this proposal to the British Cabinet and to take up negotiations on this immediately."[1458]

The British historian, A.J.P. Taylor:

> "Ministers, led by Halifax, warned Chamberlain that the government would fall unless it sent an ultimatum to Hitler before the House met again...

In this curious way the French, who had preached resistance to Germany for twenty years, appeared to be dragged into war by the British, who had for twenty years preached conciliation. Both countries went to war for that part of the peace settlement which they had long regarded as least defensible...

Such were the origins of the Second World War, or rather of the war between the three Western Powers over the settlement of Versailles; a war which had been implicit since the moment when the first war ended."[1459]

The British Foreign Secretary, shortly after the ultimatum to Germany:

"We have now forced Hitler into war, so that he can no longer cancel one part after the other of the Versailles Treaty by peaceful means."[1460]

The diplomat, Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, being in the immediate vicinity of Lord Halifax, could add his own witty remark:

"Lord Halifax seemed relieved that we had taken our decision [of 3 September]. He called for beer, which was brought down by a sleepy Resident Clerk in pyjamas. We laughed and joked…"[1461]

BBC London shortly after the outbreak of war:

"Hitler has started the war but he cannot bring it to an end."[1462]

Or to put it another way: One would not allow it that he should bring it to an end, no matter what the existing state of affairs!

Had not Lloyd George been expounding, already on 19 May 1939 in the House of Commons, the strategy of a lengthy and ever widening war? He was not alone amongst the British parliamentarians in holding this view:

"'The main military purpose and scheme of the dictators is to produce quick results, to avoid a prolonged war. A prolonged war never suits dictators.' And in order not to permit a quick victory of the dictators, Lloyd George thought it extremely necessary to bring into being as quickly as possible a triple agreement against them."[1463]

One would do well to read the original version from Lloyd George, which Winston Churchill called "words of wisdom":

"The main military purpose of the dictators and scheme of the dictators is to produce quick results, to avoid a prolonged war. A prolonged war never suits dictators. A prolonged war like the Peninsular War wears down, and the great Russian defence, which produced no great military victory for the Russians, broke Napoleon. Germany's ideal is now, and always has been, a war which is brought to a speedy end. The war against Austria in 1866 did not last more than a few weeks, and the war in 1870 was waged in such a way that it was practically over in a month or two. In 1914 plans were made with exactly the same aim in view, and it was very nearly achieved; and they would have achieved it but for Russia. But from the moment they failed to achieve a speedy victory, the game was up. You may depend upon it that the great military thinkers of Germany have been working out the problem, what was the mistake of 1914, what did they lack, how can they fill up the gaps and repair the blunders or avoid them in the next war?"[1464]

In conformity with this strategy, Chamberlain and Halifax showed a complete disregard, both before and after the start of the war, for the Baltic

States, for Poland, for Italy – to say nothing of Germany – but also treated France, willing for peace, in the same manner, when they

a. caught France unaware at the end of March 1939 with the guarantee to Poland;
b. rejected immediately and with finality the mediation attempts on Mussolini's part from 31 August and 2 September – for the convening of a conference for 5 September – and, thereby, rendered ineffective the approval for this plan from Paris;
c. on 3 September, high-handedly, without consulting the ally, sent a two-hour ultimatum to Germany and were urging Paris shortly afterwards to follow suit.

Ten minutes before this ultimatum from London expired, at 10.50 a.m. (3 September), Dahlerus in Berlin announced to the British Foreign Office that Göring had received formal permission from Hitler to fly to London in order to reach a rational resolution (suspension of all hostilities on the condition that the troops remain at their current fronts for the duration of the talks).

> "Mr. Dahlerus telephoned to the Foreign Office at 10.50 a.m. to say that the German Government had drafted their reply, which was on its way to us. It should reach us by 11, though he could not guarantee that.
>
> As a last resort, might he suggest that Field-Marshal Göring should fly over to London to discuss matters?
>
> The Secretary of State sent a reply to the effect that our position had been known to the German Government for some time, and we could not now delay our procedure."[1465]

This telephone conversation took place half an hour after a previous telephone call, in which Dahlerus had told an official of the Foreign Office, Mr. Roberts, that the German side was most anxious to give satisfactory assurances to the British government not to violate the independence of Poland. "However, never in world history had an army withdrawn before negotiations." [1465]

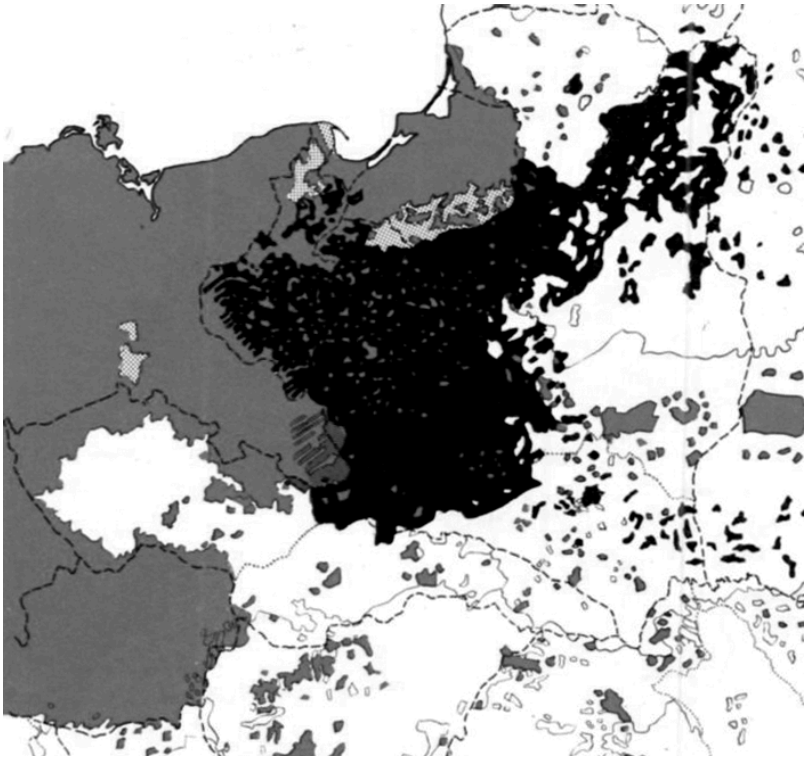
Shortly after that Great Britain declared war on Germany, and at 5.00 p.m. France did likewise. Hereby was the Poland conflict turned into a European war. The same coterie, but also Stalin, the world revolutionary, would see to it that there would be a war of world-wide dimensions, that there would be an all-out war and that there would be an unbelievable brutalising in the conduct of the war.

On this 3 September 1939, however, Winston Churchill announced to his country and to the world:

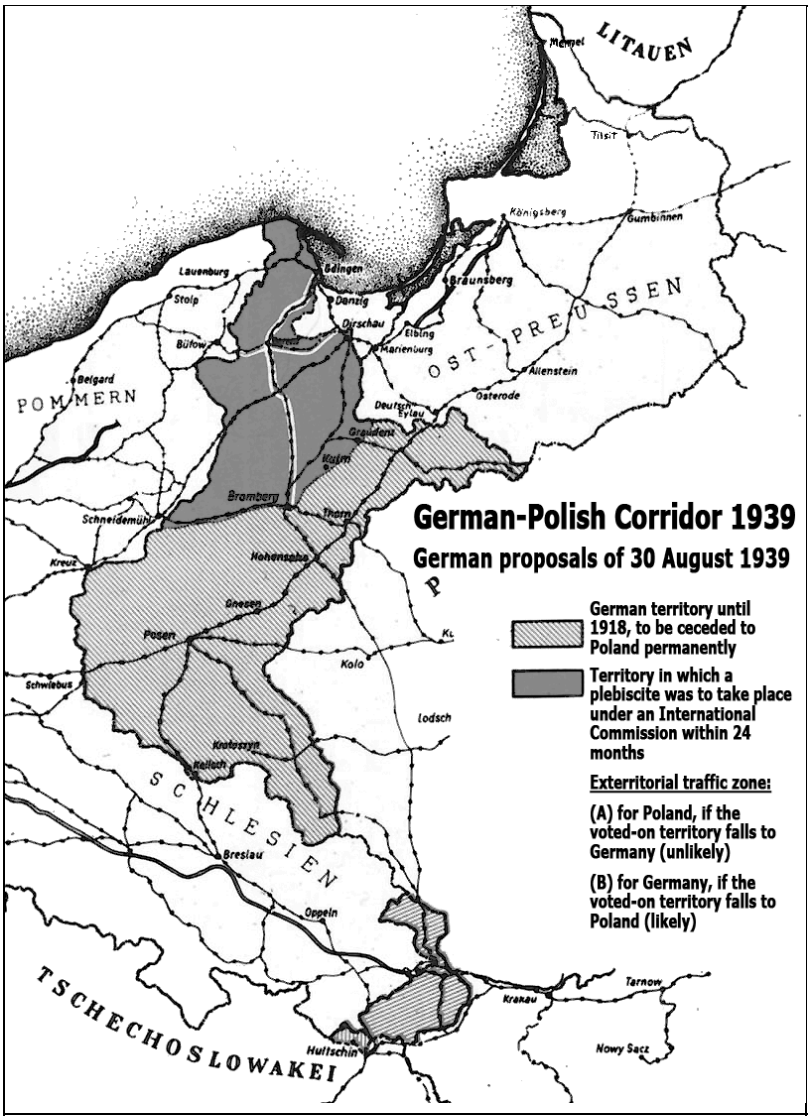
> "In this solemn hour it is a consolation to recall and to dwell upon our repeated efforts for peace. All have been ill-starred, but all have been faithful and sincere... This moral conviction alone affords that ever-fresh resilience which renews the strength and energy of people in long, doubtful and dark days. Outside, the storms of war may blow and the lands may be lashed with the fury of its gales, but in our own hearts this Sunday morning there is peace. Our hands may be active, but our consciences are at rest."[1466]

As far as Lord Halifax is concerned, who, already on 21 July had rejected Henderson's suggestion of stopping or, rather, restricting press polemics,[1467] there exists a further incriminating quotation from the last day of peace:

> "There was disquiet in the British House of Commons. A Member of Parliament from the Labour Party met the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, in the lobby on 2 September. 'Are you still hopeful?' he asked. 'If you mean hopeful for war,' answered Halifax, 'then your hope will be fulfilled tomorrow.' 'Thank God!' replied the representative of the Labour Party."[1468]



Map 6: *Settlement areas of the German and Polish peoples at the 1910 level. Black: Poles; dark grey: Germans; light grey: Masurs (southern East Prussia), Kaschubs (Upper Pomerania and West Prussia) and Sorbs (Lausitz); the Masurs and Sorbs are old Slavic tribes who have lived within the borders of Germany for centuries and who have no historical connection to Poland.*



Map 7: *Hitler's last-minute proposal for a peaceful settlement. His offer included a resettlement of all ethnic Germans from Poland to Germany, which amounted to him agreeing to an ethnic cleansing of Poland. For Poland, this generous offer equated a declaration of war…*

“War-Guilt” before the Nuremberg Tribunal

When on 30 January 1937 the Reich government withdrew solemnly the declaration, extracted under duress in 1919, that Germany was responsible for the First World War, not one of the Versailles Powers objected. This did not stop them, however, from once more dishing up in 1939, as in the years following down to this day, the worn-out lie about the war guilt of 1914, so as to create a “Super-Versailles” that would exceed all the formerly perpetrated violations against justice, morals, sense of decency and truth. Here is what historians say about the Versailles “Treaty”:

> “The enforcing of decisions with violence and destruction, making a mockery of the right of self-determination, this threat to world peace behind the mask of the peace treaty,”[1469] “which could become an even bigger disaster for the world than the war,”[1470] “which will destroy the idea of justice for many generations and render impossible a world order founded on moral principles,”[1471] “this system of treaties that produces a permanent state of war,”[1472] “which means the continuation of war under a different guise,”[1473] “these intrigues and dishonourable manoeuvrings which have turned the Versailles Treaty and the other four [subsequent treaties] into the biggest fraud in history,”[1474]

But the same or even worse violations of international law were again, in Potsdam and Nuremberg in 1945-1946, put in the statute book for further political development. Instead of the 27 states standing in for the “conscience of the world,” this time there would be gathered an assemblage from the rank and file, even more ignorant, misinformed and hungry for the spoils, with the promise of henceforth “playing a role” in world politics (repeatedly emphasised by F.D. Roosevelt). Although after 1918 it had become more and more obvious over the years that, by solely charging the defeated enemy, the problem of war cannot be perceived, solved or “judged” in a historically accurate way, these same victorious powers, in 1945 in Potsdam and Nuremberg, were basing their way of thinking once more on the vengeful, destructive spirit of Versailles, just as they had done once before after the First World War. Nothing has changed in the judging of the defeated adversary. Any doubts about his “guilt” were not to be tolerated. At the most a discussion of the prosecution’s arguments was allowed. The Soviet prosecutor General Nikitchenko, described as a “murderer many times over of his own comrades,” stated at the time of the Nuremberg “War Criminal Trials”:

"The guilt of the accused has already been decided by the heads of governments at Moscow and Teheran; the one remaining task of this court is, therefore, merely to give them the punishment they deserve."[1475]

The repeatedly made proposals from the Weimar government to have an international commission examine the question of war guilt by analysing all the documents were refused by the victorious powers after 1919. In 1945, these self-same Allies, now together with the Soviet Union, nipped in the bud any such request from the outset: they imprisoned the German leadership in so far as their members had not been immediately liquidated, convicted them in accordance with the communist criminal justice system of collective guilt, dismembered and divided Germany, and made any tendency or stirring disagreeable to the occupation powers, also that of an oppositional intellectual spirit, a punishable offence.

Propaganda and revenge-justice transformed the war lies into "historical truths," into purposefully crafted political dogmas. The war objective of the Allied camp, "an even more ruthless Versailles," was put into effect also with regards to the defaming of the principles and morality of the German people. Slogans, expressions, errors of judgment taken to the furthest extremes, prevention of any factual criticism, the moralistic pariah treatment of the vanquished enemy and, for themselves, the obstruction of their own wrongful actions – nobody cared what means and methods were used to achieve their ends. If one did not support at full volume the dogma of "sole German guilt," one had to face being sentenced as a "Fascist war criminal" or have his professional occupation ruined for being "incorrigible," a "stick-in-the-mud" or a "reactionary."

Nuremberg, city of party rallies and conferences held by the fallen regime, was the choice for the performance of sentencing the "Fascist war criminals," those German prisoners to whom the judges of the Inter-Allied Military Tribunal (IMT) were referring to as "criminals" even before the start of proceedings. The charges to be brought were exclusively made against these, and only these. Given an "interpretation of the law" such as this, the historical task to which the IMT laid claim was bound to be a failure from the start. The American chief prosecutor, Robert H. Jackson, declared unequivocally:

"We must not let ourselves be drawn into a trial of the causes of the war…"[1476]
"I believe that this trial would do much harm if it examined the political causes of the war."[1477]

These and similar lines of reasoning were used during the years 1943-1945 by numerous British and American voices who, instead of having to bother with legal proceedings, wanted to seize hold of "Hitler and his cronies" for wholesale execution. U.S. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, believed that

> "in a trial, deceitful defence argumentation could still produce a dangerous propaganda effect."[1478]

Yet in spite of this, the Allies decided, with the Moscow Declaration of 30 October 1943 and the London Agreement of 8 August 1945, upon holding show trials in furtherance of their political interests and by utilising the "courts of law" for their propaganda. The jurisdiction of the "International Military Tribunal" for trying the "major war criminals" was defined in a statute ('The Charter') in such a way that no other outcome was at all possible than the beforehand agreed-upon "punishment of the defendants." In this statute it was stipulated, amongst other things, that the tribunal

- must reject objections raised on grounds of interest with regard to the Judges nominated by the victor (Article 3);
- had as their area of responsibility to charge exclusively members of the "Axis Powers" (Article 6);
- was to declare invalid the appeal of the defendants to the principle of acting under orders ('superior orders') (Article 8);
- "shall not be bound by technical rules of evidence," instead "it shall adopt and apply to the greatest possible extent expeditious and nontechnical procedure" (Articles 18 and 19);
- "shall not require proof of facts of common knowledge but shall take judicial notice thereof" (Article 21); this would, of course, cover all propaganda claims.

> "At this conference [London 8 August 1945], prosecutors and judge consulted before the trial upon the method by which the accused should be brought to punishment. The minutes of the conference have been published by the Americans. No effort was made to provide a general statement of international law by which the actions of the accused should be judged. Instead, these actions were considered and a law drafted expressly to exclude the defences that it was anticipated the accused might advance.
>
> Such was the Statute of Nuremberg, the basis for the war criminal trials…
>
> The result of war crime trials has been not to create international law but to destroy that law of nations which our ancestors had patiently built up over the centuries."[1479]

Irrespective of this statute that was perverting the course of justice, the distinguishing feature of the Nuremberg proceedings was the countless infringements of the law. It is in contravention of every legal norm

- –when the victor is both the prosecutor as well as the judge and has nominated himself for this office;
- –when his function is prosecuting attorney and lawmaker at the same time;
- –when he condemns actions which hitherto were neither provided for by statute nor were in contravention of international law (*e.g.* the preparatory planning of a campaign by a General Staff officer or the supplying of arms by a contractor);
- –when he repeals legal clauses and systems of values which were binding on the defendants and the entire defeated Nation and establishes arbitrarily new norms that fulfil his purposes: “Crimes against Peace,” “Crimes against Humanity,” “Support of an unlawful State” etc., and then will interpret these norms dialectically;
- –when he declares German reprisals in partisan warfare retroactively as crimes and punishable as criminal acts, while the causes provoking them are disregarded;
- –when he withholds documents from the defence while serving other documents at short notice, refuses witnesses for the defence and rejects the motion to hear evidence, and when the defence is threatened also with arrest and, indeed, is taken into custody just as soon as they make a protest against some breach of the law;[1480]
- –when he distorts the meaning of documents by means of shortening, by falsifying or by shifting of emphasis, and when he then adjudges as authentic these papers so badly mangled or totally falsified;
- –when he trivialises or conceals decisive interconnections and contexts;
- –when witnesses are being kept in long-term imprisonment and are put under pressure with threats of handing them over to the Soviet Secret Services (GPU) or bringing charges against them, thus coercing them into making false statements and committing perjury;
- –when he allows agents of the victorious powers to appear as witnesses;
- –when he brings in procedures that label just about everybody as members of a “criminal organisation” and, therefore, treats him potentially as a criminal offender;

–when he, after having availed himself of his newly created "legal clauses" for his vengeful purposes, cancels them again immediately, thus denying them to all other nations – and consequently to future international law.

The fact that all these manipulations had to be carried out in order to "justify" the sentences arranged beforehand, although the biased make-up of the Tribunal and the one-sided charges would already assure the outcome, is proof of just how shaky the ground was for the prosecution.

> "When punitive actions do no longer require the proof of individual guilt as a prerequisite, but rather symbolise collective retaliatory measures, or when they are even meant to influence the entire sociological strata of a nation for political aims, then they become eminently political measures. Such disregard for the juridical character of a war crime punishment became very clear to the Allies in the conference year of 1943." [1478]

When Stalin in 1943 in Teheran proposed the shooting of 50,000 German officers, making it into a war objective, he was not at all prompted by

> "the aim of punitive action for particular crimes. He regarded this measure merely as an appropriate way of breaking Germany's military strength forever." [1478]

By the year 1946, nothing had changed in this basic position of the Allied conception.

During the 50 years before the Second World War, the German nation and their governmental systems have been appraised in extremely varied ways and, in fact, according to the momentary interests of several Great Powers – right up to the statement of Harry Truman, former Senator and later President of the United States of America:

> "If we find that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia, but if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and in this way they will kill each other all the more thoroughly."[1481]

Based on this attitude, the value judgment thus established was turned into a world-wide dogma in 1945/46 by changing this totally one-sided basic principle of the victorious enemy into an "international legal title" and "historical truth" – by virtue of force of arms. The contrivances that had become "necessary" in this way for the perversion of the course of justice also required from the Inter-Allied Military Tribunal an uncritical acceptance of the Allied war policies and war aims. In a like manner, this same IMT had to cut off rigorously any references to Versailles, "the root of the matter of the Second World War,"[1482] as well as references to responsibilities which, in the period between the two world wars, are resting clearly on the shoulders of Germany's enemies.

One had no hesitation about constructing "international law" on such artificially concocted premises, and this in plain view of the public at large throughout the world. Furthermore, the IMT did not at all take account of the factors that had led to the collapse of parliamentary democracy and, consequently, the Weimar system in Germany. These factors were not ignored because they were issues of German internal affairs, though, because all the internal affairs that appeared to be incriminating in Germany between 1933 and 1945 were very well brought into play.

How can it be reconciled with the maxims of the law if a country (the USSR), at the beginning of war, is on the side of the aggressor (Hitler's), holding his enemies (Britain, France, Poland) responsible for the outbreak of war; then, at the end of the war, turns 180° and puts all the blame on this "aggressor," but, sometime after the liquidation of the "aggressor" state, once more transfers a large part of the list of sins back onto those countries (Britain, France, the United States) that it had pronounced guilty initially? How can it be reconciled with the maxims of the law, when Germany is charged with a war of aggression against Poland, while at the same time the Soviet Union, having likewise attacked Poland in October 1939, having attacked Finland in late 1939, having occupied Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and parts of Romania in 1940, and, after their victory over Germany in 1945, once more incorporated into her own territory Eastern Poland, the Baltic States, and parts of Hungary and Romania, is placed on the Bench as Honourable Judge?

> "There is hardly a legal principle that was not trampled underfoot at Nuremberg: in the absence of a law there can be neither crime nor punishment, acting under orders or duress is not punishable, nobody must be removed from his judiciary, nobody may be the judge of his own case, nobody may be called to account for the deeds of others. After the unconditional surrender that was all yesterday's law, no longer valid for the judges at Nuremberg."[1483]

Indeed, there never has been a victor, up to now, that destroyed quite so systematically and utterly the entire political literature of his defeated enemy and, consequently, deprived historical research of it, as was done with the National Socialist literature after the German surrender in 1945 – in all occupation zones. "The public at large throughout the world" pass over this fact without any hint of criticism and with inconceivable self-satisfaction carry on with their hypocritical postulates: "freedom of thought and speech," "equal rights and the right of self-determination," "democracy and a state under the rule of law." It matters not to them that at war's end

and basically ever since almost every possibility of an intellectual defence was taken away from the prostrate German nation.

> "Every fibre of our being revolts at the thought that highly civilised nations are allowed once more [1945] to appeal not to the judgment of the law but to that of might."[1484]

How true was the statement from the Indian representative at the war crime trials in Tokyo 1947-48, Judge Rahabinode Pal:

> "The farce of a trial of vanquished leaders by the victors was itself an offence against humanity."[1485]

It is significant of the Nuremberg and Tokyo proceedings that not one single judge has, as yet, shown willing to answer to the serious criticism appearing in many countries with regard to this "justice." Such a judge would have been obliged to discard the legal maxim: If a breach of the law is to be redressed, then the legal proceedings trying to redress them must be lawful themselves.

The United Nations Organization covered up this blindfolded law. It has condoned the extermination campaign against Germany along with the aims and resulting consequences, just as much as it condoned the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials – all in the name of "world conscience." Having come of age since the Washington Pact of 1 January 1942, it simply sees itself as the child of the coalition forces against the Third Reich and Japan. Only those states were initially admitted to the club of hypocritical nations that would support, without any criticism, the war aims and the methods of Allied warfare, those that would fight against these "enemies of humanity" and would recognise the United Nations' Charter, including Articles 53 and 107, which expressly declared and still declare as lawful all wartime and post-war measures against "any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter."[1486]

The General Assembly of the thus founded UNO, in order to safeguard against anticipated repercussions of the "war criminal trials" on future international law, has refused expressly, in a basic resolution of December 1948, to recognise the "IMT-legal maxims" as valid international law. But, to be sure, for the sentencing of Germany's elite after World War II, the United Nations sanction their use to this day! It is a grotesque reality that the "law" applied against Germany since that time has not only lost its legal force, but has even been explicitly denounced by the universal forum of its initiators – without, however, rehabilitating Germany's name or, rather,

Germany's politics or even just setting into motion a fair historical examination into the causes of the war.

British historian A.J.P. Taylor expounded on the documents of the Nuremberg "war criminal trials":

> "Though these [Nuremberg] documents look imposing in their endless volumes, they are dangerous material for a historian to use. They were collected, hastily and almost at random, as a basis for lawyers' briefs. This is not how historians would proceed. The lawyer aims to make a case; the historian wishes to understand a situation. The evidence which convinces lawyers often fails to satisfy us; our methods seem singularly imprecise to them. But even lawyers must now have qualms about the evidence at Nuremberg. The documents were chosen not only to demonstrate the war guilt of the men on trial but to conceal that of the prosecuting Powers."[1487]

A U.S. historian stated likewise:

> "Even more important than the travesties with respect to law and equity was the assurance that these trials make wars far more brutal and ruthless in the future. In all wars to come the losers will be regarded as the aggressors, no matter what the facts, and will be punished accordingly. Hence, no methods of wartime destruction, however horrible, can be spared to produce victory, at whatever human and material cost. The trials will, therefore, produce exactly the reverse of the results which were represented as their main justification."[1488]

Documents against Hitler

Demands for Living Space (*Lebensraum)* in Mein Kampf

The references in *Mein Kampf* (pages 732, 740-742, 757) to the question – yet to be solved – of *Lebensraum* (living space) in the East (Russia) are often given as proof for Hitler's belligerent intentions and long-term planning of conquest and, consequently, for the war guilt.[1489] It is ludicrous to want to assert that Hitler, onward from the time in prison in Landsberg 1925 up to his death in 1945, was holding in his hands the initiative in the sphere of world politics, while all the other, considerably more powerful sovereign nations in Europe and throughout the world were only counteracting defensively to his moves, it being beyond their capability to take active measures. This, though, would be the cause-and-effect conclusion one would reach, if one were to offer *Mein Kampf* as a "resource of evidence" in the area of foreign policy. If, on the other hand, one calls into play *Mein Kampf* as underlying the investigation for appraising the war guilt question, then this, too, would only be a meaningful testimony if one were to compare it, at the same time, with all the public utterances made by French, British, Polish and Soviet publicists and politicians during the nineteen twenties. Only when put within this framework would it be possible to assess the level of agitation prevailing at that period in the area of domestic and foreign politics. Only when put within that time frame would it become clear that Hitler was not out of place with *Mein Kampf*. Taking the same measuring rod, by which nowadays is deduced, without further thought, Hitler's war guilt from *Mein Kampf*, as a basis for the former works of Winston Churchill, for the stated objectives of Poincaré or Clemenceau, Masaryk, Benes, Pilsudski, Lloyd George, Lenin or Stalin, or even just of the representatives of the German parties during the Weimar time, then war guilt or, that is to say, determination for war, could be ascribed to these in much the same irresponsible fashion. In 1932 Professor Theodor Heuss commented on the aforementioned works:

> "Bound up with the romantic memories of the grand colonisation achievements of the German Middle Ages that were taken across the Elbe to the East, is the present, quite impossible, solution

which the Versailles system has enforced upon the German Eastern borders. Because there has been created here an unbearable source of irritation and friction, so the emotional sentiment would tend toward this direction all the more easily, recognising the delicate nature of the European problems in the East."[1490]

These reflections from a politician who was himself averse to the National Socialist movement show at least that in the Weimar Republic *Mein Kampf*, whose title was originally to have been "Four and a half Years of Struggle against Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice,"[1491] was regarded even by Hitler's followers as a temperamental outburst of an emotionally charged politician distressed by the pitiful state of his fatherland, not, however, as an agenda for a future belligerent policy. These were the utterances of a public speaker and young party leader, not of a mature statesman. As a statesman Hitler did not – until the outbreak of war – pursue such aims in any way. Even the prosecution at the Nuremberg IMT in 1945-46 did not manage to prove from the German secret documents that the Czech crisis or the Polish campaign or even the Russian campaign[1492] were connected with German plans for conquest, for settlement, or for extermination, let alone to have been based on them. Rather, it could be proved that underlying all of these fateful stages were entirely different causes, reasons, motives and considerations. Hitler would doubtless have done well, as a statesman, to have expunged from *Mein Kampf* these utterances from that time. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that he repeatedly had stated in public that he was not a writer but a politician and should, therefore, be judged on his politics, not by each word of his "musings behind bars," originally meant to appear as a "series of leading articles for the [party newspaper] *Völkischer Beobachter*."

"I am not a writer, but a statesman. I shall write the revision of *Mein Kampf* into the book of History,"[1493]

declared Hitler on 21 February 1936 in an interview with the correspondent of the French daily *Paris-Soir*, and he then had this interview, together with the controversial parts from *Mein Kampf,* published on the front page of all the German newspapers ("The publication of this interview was to run into unusual difficulties in Paris"! [1493])

"That much I do know: Had I foreseen in 1924 that I would become Chancellor of the Reich, I would not have written the book."[1494]

Hitler, without a doubt, had no time as statesman to rectify his book. Isolated corrections would remain incomplete. *Mein Kampf* had been

written in the early period of the NSDAP, and it was closely attached to the politics of the day, the journalism and the agitation of its time. In the same way that the comments and observations regarding France were born of the post-war situation of that time and the French occupation of the Ruhr region, so, likewise, must Hitler's ideas about the east in *Mein Kampf* not be regarded as a definite foreign policy guideline of the Third Reich vis-à-vis a much strengthened Soviet Union. *Mein Kampf* was neither a catechism of the National Socialist worldview (*Weltanschauung*), nor a theoretical foundation stone for the domestic, foreign, economic, social or cultural policies of the German Reich. Rather the program of the NSDAP, which did not assume a more concrete shape until later, as well as Hitler's maturing stature over the years – one only needs to appraise his speeches made as a statesman – and moreover the many unpredictable influences from home and abroad affecting German politics, these were to determine the direction of the NSDAP when wearing the mantle of state, not the book *Mein Kampf* which, with agitating intent, had been hastily jotted down during a time of an internal political power struggle.

As for the claims for *Lebensraum* in *Mein Kampf,* the following deliberations should be taken into account, which might have affected Hitler's world of thought:

a. Hitler wanted – in this respect all contemporary historians are of one mind – to win over Britain. As a realist, he knew that he had better remove Britain's concern about a possible German threat by announcing, from the outset, that the German direction of interests lay in the east.
b. Hitler also tried to calm any fears from the countries on the Continent which could have arisen from the prospective argument of a demographic German population pressure for those countries. He wanted to make it clear that he was not even making any claims on France; he tried to moderate France's hostile attitude by orientating Germany's line of vision toward the east.
c. In the face of Communist ideology and Soviet might, the tenor and basic nature of which Hitler had understood much sooner than anyone else, he realised that he would not have achieved any more with a friendly attitude toward the USSR than he might lose with a determined policy of independence.

d. It mattered to Hitler to gain some understanding in the world for Germany's shortage of space, for the crammed existence of her population and for the injustice of the Versailles deprivation of territory – especially in the east.
e. Hitler's *Lebensraum* explanations were meant to counter the Weimar tendencies for relinquishment and appeasement.
f. Expressed in figures, the German nation had trebled within one century, but the German *Lebensraum*, on the other hand, had considerably decreased. No German politician could overlook these realities. Still unknown at that time were the possibilities of feeding a growing population, even in a limited space, with the aid of industrial and technical means. At any rate, the dire economic straits during the Weimar period did not foster such hopes.

And when, as a last resort, a French Prime Minister, such as Clemenceau, had declared that, planned within a program, it would be quite a good thing for 25 million Germans to die, since there were too many of them in the world, then such a recommendation would naturally have provoked in Hitler precisely the opposite reaction, namely, to attempt everything possible to secure for his people the essential means of existence and the claims to *Lebensraum* derived from historical rights.

"Key Documents" of the IMT on Hitler's Non-Public Speeches

At the so-called Nuremberg "war crime trials" in 1945/46, the prosecution submitted some documents which refer to alleged secret discussions held by Hitler. The Inter-Allied Military Tribunal, which called itself falsely "International Military Tribunal," upgraded the status of these papers to "documents," indeed to "key documents," because they allegedly provide the "key" to Hitler's foreign policy, seeing that Hitler's politics and Hitler's real aims from 1937-1939 are reflected in these and only these. The German defendants were convicted partly on the strength of these "documents."

On all of the IMT's "key documents" dealing with Hitler's non-public addresses, their origin, authenticity, contents and date are so very controversial that every objective expert from the outset – *i.e.* immediately after their "discovery" in the year 1945 – should have rejected "these documents" as forgeries and falsifications, which in part has happened already, albeit couched in diplomatically guarded form, before the Nuremberg Tribunal. Although the victorious powers in 1945 confiscated all the files of the Reich government, took personal control of them and analysed them, though refusing permission outright to neutral commissions to examine them and denying the defence in Nuremberg their frequent requests for access to any evidence to prove the origin of doubtful documents, this did not at all prevent the "historians" from uncritically accepting and disseminating that which the IMT utilises as incriminating "documents," which they have included in their volumes of "documents" and passed off as "documents from captured German files," irrespective of whether this is true or not. Consequently, the "key documents" had so much publicity that any historian striving for objectivity will need to tackle the problem.

The first of these "key documents" is the so-called "Hossbach Memorandum."

The "Hossbach Memorandum" – Hitler's Address to the Commanders-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht on 5 November 1937

The so-called "Hossbach Memorandum" is not available in any shape or form, neither as an original nor as a copy, nor has it ever been.[1495] There exists merely the photocopy of a typewritten copy which had been slipped privately (the source remained unknown), without a signature, to the Americans in 1945. This photocopy is since that time, contrary to the truth, accepted as "in the keeping of the German government in the archives and also captured therein." This photocopy was upgraded to prosecution document and was marked "386-PS, exhibit U.S. 25."[1496]

The "secretary," Colonel Hossbach, a member of the opposition against Hitler, does not vouch, according to his own statement, for "every single

word" and has refused to authenticate the "photocopy of the typewritten copy" – PS 386 – that was presented by the IMT prosecution as being identical to his original notes. [1495] When called as a witness during the IMT Trial, he stated:

> "It is beyond my knowledge as to how one or several typewritten copies of my one-and-only handwritten minutes could have materialized."[1497]

To this day these curious events leading to those copies are still unknown. The truth is that no minutes were taken officially, and that Colonel Hossbach had written down Hitler's exposition, by hand and from memory, only five days after the meeting. His reason for doing so remains completely in the dark; he had no such orders. He could not do shorthand, he had not even taken any notes during the talk and, therefore, he was not in a position to give a verbatim and complete account of the meeting. He relied on his memory, as he declared in a notarised affidavit on 18 June 1946.[1498] These "notes giving the gist" are all the more questionable, since there existed already, on the very same 5 November 1937, differences of opinion between the Reich War Minister von Blomberg and the Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe, Colonel General Göring, as to what Hitler had actually said and wanted.[1499] Already before the start of the meeting, the Commanders-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe and the Navy, Göring and Admiral Dr. h.c. Raeder, had been informed that Hitler wanted merely to rectify more vigorously the deficiencies in armament.[1500] The Colonel General, later Field Marshal, von Brauchitsch only learned about these talks in Nuremberg in 1945.[1501] Neither the Chief of German Army General Staff, Colonel General Beck, nor the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army (until 1938), Colonel General von Fritsch, regarded the talks to be of sufficient importance to inform von Brauchitsch about them as the succeeding Commander-in-Chief of the Army.[1502] Hence any later overstating of the importance of the talks loses all credibility by these facts alone.

Hitler's expositions are founded on hypothetical considerations which, in the event of a possible war between Great Britain and Italy, could affect German policy. There was no talk of planning an offensive war, much less a world war. That is why no decision aiming at an objective of that kind could have been imposed on the Commanders-in-Chief. A concrete plan was neither proposed nor was it devised. Not even any foreign policy guidelines

for the coming years were laid down, but merely possibilities for development were written down, and any response to them was shown.

For the rest, the Reich War Minister von Blomberg had taken over the initiative for the meeting, "so that differences of opinion between the Reich War Minister and the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, with regard to the allocation of raw materials to the three branches of the Wehrmacht, would be settled by Hitler's decision."[1503] The assertion that Hitler had chosen this occasion and this panel (von Blomberg, von Fritsch, Raeder, Göring, Reich Foreign Minister Baron von Neurath)[1504] to arrange his "testamentary estate" is not convincing. According to the photocopy that the IMT presented, Hitler, by way of introduction, supposedly requested of those present to regard his exposition as "testamentary estate in the event of his demise." It makes no sense, however, that Hitler, who used very few notes, should have chosen just this circle of five (with Hossbach, six) – without even his deputy, Rudolf Hess – to impart to them, without having first recorded it in written form, a "bequest" which, more to the point, did not even provide answers to essential questions. As Hermann Göring observed:

> "As far as the word 'testament' is concerned, the use of this word contradicts the Führer's views completely."[1505]

Judging by the revealed contents, it is equally nonsensical that Hitler would have refused twice to sign Hossbach's minutes, as he, "for the present, had no time."[1506] There were simply no minutes prepared to begin with.

Further are there to be found – in conspicuous harmony – both in the "Hossbach Memorandum" and also in the other "key documents," interconnections which, at the time of the conference, were not as yet known, since they happened only later: When here in the "Hossbach Memorandum," for example, Hitler is purported to have said that a French offensive would probably be brought to a standstill on our Western fortifications, then he could only have said something like that after the completion of the West Wall (Siegfried Line). The undertaking of this West Wall got off the ground in 1936, and construction commenced in 1937, with an estimated construction period of twelve years; this was accelerated only because of the Czech mobilisation in May 1938. There could hardly be any question of a protective wall at this point in time.[1507]

A further means of identifying this photocopy as a forgery can be spotted, as regards contents, in that it cannot be identical to the original transcript of which no member of the government actually had any knowledge, let alone had countersigned, because it has been, apart from its distorted representation and several invented sentences, also shortened in its contents. So, for example, the discussion between Göring, von Blomberg and von Fritsch, is missing.

> "Why then did Hitler hold this conference? This question was not asked at Nuremberg; it has not been asked by historians. The conference of 5 November 1937 was a curious gathering. Only Göring was a Nazi. The others were old-style Conservatives who had remained in office to keep Hitler under control; all of them except Raeder were to be dismissed from their posts within three months. Hitler knew that all except Göring were his opponents...
>
> Why did he reveal his inmost thoughts to men whom he distrusted and whom he was shortly to discharge? This question has an easy answer: he did not reveal his inmost thoughts. There was no crisis in foreign policy to provoke a broad discussion or sweeping decisions. The conference was a manoeuvre in domestic affairs."[1508]

This analysis makes it clear: The so-called "Hossbach Memorandum" does not furnish any proof that Hitler had been planning "a conspiracy against peace"; on the contrary, it is a classic example of how the post-war "judiciary" and their propaganda "historians" were forced to fall back on the notes of German resistance member and still had to falsify and exaggerate these in order to give such an indictment a veneer of credibility.

Hitler's Address to the German Press 10 November 1938

The contents of this speech by Hitler to the German media were allegedly kept a secret until they were identified only after the war. This "document" was not available to the IMT in Nuremberg 1945/46, but was "discovered" only later. It is nonetheless part of the subject matter under discussion here, chronologically speaking and with regards to contents. It is in a like manner passed off as "proof" that Hitler had been planning war for many years. The following statements, besides others, are found in it:

> "In this we have set ourselves many tasks this year, which we aim to reach… with our propaganda. The gradual preparing of the German people is first. Circumstances have forced me to speak for decades almost exclusively of peace…
>
> It goes without saying that promoting such peace propaganda over decades is not without some risks, because all too easily can the view take hold in the minds of many people that the present

regime identifies with the resolve and the intention to keep the peace at all cost. This, however, would not only lead to a false appraisal of the goals of this system…

Pure necessity was the reason why I was talking for decades only about peace…

They [the German people] must learn to believe in the final victory with such fanaticism…"[1509]

This "document" is possibly even more doubtful than the "Hossbach-Memorandum." Leaving aside the absurdity of announcing, a full year ahead of the ostensibly planned strike, to the press one's own intentions for war – a decision for attack is usually kept secret! – there were at that time no references made to this speech in the entire foreign press, and the press at home published no provocative articles. Since all the German press had apparently interpreted this address by the Führer as moderate and had used it along these lines, this renders invalid from the outset all later attempts at trying to construe it as proof for Hitler's determination for war. It is superfluous to point out the explanations from the "Institut für Zeitgeschichte" (German official Institute for Contemporary History) in its quarterly journal (*Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, no. 2, 1958, pp. 175ff.), where it is admitted that the sound recording of this speech (the only tangible form of evidence) cannot be authenticated in regard to either its physical substance or to its language, and that the record under consideration contains only a part of the alleged speech anyway.

It is also worthwhile to keep in mind that this speech was made on the day following the so-called *Kristallnacht*, the anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany which, as Hitler was well aware, sullied Germany's reputation internationally.

Hitler's Address to the Senior Officers of the Wehrmacht
23 May 1939

Grand Admiral Raeder described this alleged "document" 079-L, IMT vol. XXXVII, pp. 546f., the so-called "Schmundt Report," as "the most abstruse document concerning a Hitler speech in existence, for a large part of the statements in my opinion makes no sense whatsoever."[1510] This sheet of paper (cover-page with 15 pages attached), passed off by the IMT as "document from the captured German archives," has, with the exception of

"Top Secret – to be handled by officer only," no heading, no date, no official stamp to denote classified matter, no counter-signature. It is handwritten, giving just the "gist" of the content, and it contains corrections in ink, which were later inserted at some undefined point in time – not by the hand of Schmundt! Schmundt had succumbed to his injuries on 1 October 1944, having incurred these during the attempted assassination of 20 July; the authenticity of his signature is doubtful. The "document" has *not* been registered in the secret material journal, although that would have been imperative for a matter of "Top Secret – to be handled by officer only." Furthermore, there is no detail given about the number of copies. The supposed "document" is riddled with contradictions and inconsistencies, consists of statements that have no thematic link, and it has totally unheard-of political targets:

Contradictions:

There are registered on the attendance list, among others, the names of Göring and Colonel Warlimont.

1. Field Marshal Milch denied strongly that Göring had been present, since it fell to him, as Göring's Deputy, to go to the Reich Chancellery. So Göring could most definitely not give an answer to this question.
2. Warlimont's attendance would appear to be incorrect.

Called to attend were the Commanders-in-Chief of the three branches of the Wehrmacht (von Brauchitsch, Göring, Raeder), the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW, Keitel), and their General Staff Chiefs (Halder, Jeschonnek, Schniewindt), the State Secretary for Aviation (Milch), the Chief Adjutant of the Wehrmacht assigned to the Führer and Chancellor of the Reich, as well as several adjutants of the Wehrmacht. Warlimont, on the other hand, was section Chief in the Operational Office of the Wehrmacht (*Wehrmachtsführungsamt*) in the OKW. Since the Chief of the OKW (Keitel) – Warlimont's superior – was present, this alone made Warlimont's attendance unnecessary. As well as Warlimont himself, all other witnesses confirmed that he had not attended the meeting. Also, Warlimont did not even hear anything later on about this meeting. Even the Department of National Defence in the Operational Office of the

Wehrmacht (WFA) did not have Hitler's alleged remarks passed on to them.[1511]

According to the "Schmundt Report," Hitler had been speaking of the essential need to get ready for a war within 15 to 20 years and to prepare a plan for an offensive accordingly. In reality, however – and this is also mentioned in other passages of the "document" submitted – he had kept to the meagre armament program that was geared up to the years 1943-45 in unchanged form, and it has been proved that he was continually striving to strictly minimise an eventual conflict to the point that, after the campaign in France, he even began demobilisation.

Here are some passages of this "document" which contradict themselves:

> "The problem 'Poland' cannot be disassociated from the showdown with the West."
> "It must not come to a simultaneous showdown with the West (and the East)."
> "If England wants to intervene in the Polish war, then the fight must be primarily against England and France, and we must make a lighting attack on Holland"
> "...it is better to fall upon the West and finish off Poland at the same time."
> "We cannot allow ourselves be drawn into a war on two fronts on account of Poland."
> "England is the motive force driving against Germany."
> "It is not Danzig that is at stake. For us it is a matter of expanding our living space in the East and making food supplies secure and also solving the problem of the Baltic States. Food supplies can only be obtained from thinly populated areas...
> The populations of non-German territories do not render military service and are available for labour service..."[1512]

Leaving aside the fact that the undefinable and unspecified formula "solution of the problem" is used too often in this "document" to seem credible, the just quoted comments take it for granted that Germany wanted to incite a war in the west – which was totally incorrect as far as German foreign policy was concerned. Then it says in other places, quite unexpectedly: "… we are left with the decision: to attack Poland at the first suitable opportunity;" – yet such a decision did not at all exist! Hitler's later order for attack, of 31 August 1939, had nothing to do – as has been explained already – with the intention to attack Poland "at the first suitable opportunity."

> "The aim will always be to force England to her knees."
> "This is the program of attack..."
> "the setting-up of a small planning staff in the OKW for maintaining secrecy..."

When it is implied that Hitler had already revealed his "program of attack" to precisely those people from whom he was now trying to conceal it with the setting up of a planning staff and when, on 22 August 1939, he

apparently elucidated, once more, to these very same people the very same "program of attack" in, just to crown it all, a rabble rousing gibberish, so then the farcical nonsense of such "addresses" becomes evident – and with it the falsification of these compositions.

The historian Michael Freund writes about this "protocol":

> "One cannot consider the report as an exact transcript of the speech. Also, it is not at all certain that Hitler wanted to announce his actual intentions and ideas during this conference. Some of it is obviously just saying the first thing that comes into his head."[1513]

Yet in spite of this, Freund awards this paper the "impression of credibility." What an unscientific way to give an opinion from the pen of an historian!

In this meeting, of which there is not one faultless transcript in existence, were again described in theory merely the different alternatives that would be affecting German policy, and which would be brought about by a possible determination for war on the part of Britain, France and Poland. Since at this conference no minutes were taken either and therefore no copies were to be distributed, the deliberations on the situation do not constitute a conclusion reached by the Führer. The purpose of the meeting was the formation of a research staff within the OKW (High Command of the Wehrmacht), which "will have to keep the Führer informed." Theirs was the brief to "study" and provide for all possible military contingencies to ensure military success in a confrontation – as it is practiced by every military leadership in the world. Not even from the "document" 079-L – IMT vol. XXXVII, p. 546 – can it be deduced that this planning staff had been given a definite military decision for an operative planning. Had this been the case, then perhaps one could have inferred "a determination for war." The Reich Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, stated before the IMT-Nuremberg:

> "I know that he [Hitler] repeatedly told me that one had to talk with military men as if war was about to break out here or there on the next day."[1514]

Yet the former Colonel General Keitel had left this conference on 23 May 1939, believing "that there would be no war" in 1939.[1515] He was not alone in holding that opinion. Just as an example: Field Marshal von Brauchitsch quoted before the IMT-Nuremberg Hitler's words from this conference:

> "I should be an idiot if on account of Poland I were to drift into a war, like those incapable people of 1914."[1516]

Or:

> "…and when, in reply to the observation made by Field Marshal Milch that the production of heavy bombs was quite inadequate in the event of a war, and must be immediately increased, Hitler said that there was ample time for such measures, the military leaders were bound to conclude from this that Hitler had made military preparations only to support the initiated political moves, but that he would on no account risk an armed conflict with Poland."[1517]

Of course, declarations such as these were naturally not in the submitted "document." Consequently, they cannot be "protocols," cannot be proper minutes.

Further contradictions:

A number of alleged statements could not have been made, since they

a. were not consistent with the conditions prevailing at that time;

b. refer to later events, as can be proved.

On a: Why would Hitler have emphasised that he, therefore, "must reserve to himself the final order to strike," when, after all, nobody else but he would have been responsible for giving such an order anyway, and when he had not issued any directives preparing for an "attack"?

"Economic relations with Russia are only possible if and when political relations have improved." In reality, however, Hitler had still a very reserved attitude at the time of the talks toward a political rapprochement with the USSR, whereas economic ties with Moscow (concerning the Czech commitments) already existed, and on 30 May 1939 the resumption of negotiations on trade and commerce were proposed by the German side.

On b: As has been proved, Hitler had no belligerent intentions toward the west. Yet it is precisely this aspect, which the "Schmundt-Report" tries to make the centre of attention by stressing Britain's might and minimising that of France.

"Germany does not bleed to death on land." – This sentence is nonsensical, if placed within the situation in May 1939, but would seem feasible when placed within the period after the campaign of France in June 1940.

The same applies to the details given on the tactical operations of the Italian army against France: "As for Italy, we shall continue to abide by the Maginot Line break-through, which is to be studied. The Führer thinks this break-through possible." – Since Hitler had not made any preparations for war against the west and, since he endeavoured to limiting a potential

conflict with Poland to only that country – even excluding Italy from it – and since, furthermore, both Mussolini as well as Hitler were aware of Italy's inadequate preparations for war, such a remark from Hitler is nonsensical in May 1939. It would only have been conceivable in June 1940.

Any further demonstrations of this kind, as contained in this "protocol," are unnecessary. Subjecting this "document" to critical scrutiny will lead one to a devastating appraisal of its value as an historical testimony. The President of the IMT must have been aware of this too when he – in carrying out his political assignment – cut short the person who had taken part in this very meeting, *i.e.* Grand Admiral Raeder, who was attempting to point out the inconsistencies and the absurdity of this "document" 079-L. Since then, apparently no author or historian has deemed it necessary to resume from where Grand Admiral Raeder had been interrupted.

Hitler's Address to the Commanders-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht
22 August 1939

Three different versions of this meeting were introduced at the IMT:

1. Vol. XLI, pp. 16-25, doc. Raeder 27 (signed Boehm);
2. Vol. XXVI, p. 338, doc. 798-PS;
3. Vol. XXVI, p. 523, doc. 1014-PS ("Second Address").

The "documents" 798-PS and 1014-PS are written on one and the same kind of paper, with the same typewriter, they have no heading, no stamp indicating secret matter, no date, no list of names of those present, no signature. Even later on, the prosecution did not produce any established proof of origin, as had been requested.

It was claimed[1518] that these "two pieces of paper" were taken from captured German files. If this were true, their form ought to be correct, but that is not the case. Since it has been established that no minutes were taken at this meeting either, the German archives could contain no such text. These actualities of the situation are proof, furthermore, that this address by Hitler was not in the form of a program outline and was not the basis of a decision. From that fact contradictions and inconsistencies emerge already.

“Document 1014-PS” has the heading “Second Speech by the Führer, on 22 August 1939.” It is a fact that Hitler made only one speech on 22 August, which was merely interrupted by a coffee break at the Berghof. Mr. Dodd from the IMT prosecution had to admit, [1518] too, that it was a question of one and the same speech, in spite of the different headings. The two unsigned texts have not only been prepared on the same typewriter and have been written in the same style, but both of them use the “first person.” As for Hitler, he cannot be the author, since he would always have a machine with special characters, and since it would not at all have been in his interest to leave for posterity a written record of “bloodthirsty expressions,” a style which, by the way, was totally contrary to his way of arguing. The closing sentence, “Göring answers with thanks to the Führer and the assurance that the armed forces will do their duty,” breaks with the style of the “first person” and indicates that neither Hitler nor anyone else present can have drafted the text, because a clerk of the minutes could never have chosen the “first person” format.

There was no need, on 22 August 1939, for any declaration of loyalty by the leadership of the Wehrmacht. The origin of the “first person” format is, in all probability, to be traced to the author of the “minutes” of this meeting, which were forwarded to the British embassy in Berlin already on 23 August 1939. In that version, too, so as to create a more savage impression, the first person format were employed, and the remarks in question are the most primitive platitudes uttered (see the end of this chapter).

According to the minutes submitted – doc. 798-PS – Hitler had started his speech stating he wanted to give an overview of the political situation, “in order that you may have insight into the individual elements on which I base my decision to act” ... “After this, we will discuss military details.” All surviving witnesses declared that military details had neither been expected nor had they been discussed. Hence, no documentation on such discussions has ever been found. In any case, a Führer meeting was not – contrary to what the presented “documents” say – a gathering where a “decision to act” was meant to be taken or, indeed, was taken. Nothing was decided at this conference that was of any political or military significance.

Although the essay “doc. 1014-PS” is without any introduction, without any signature, without any date, etc., and is also much too brief to be an account of a speech from Hitler, and despite meaning and content being

nonsensical, contradictory and incoherent, these two "pieces of paper" were also judged to be a "document." Counsel for the Defence of Grand Admiral Raeder, Dr. Siemers, had this to say about it:

> "Most important words in this document have constantly been repeated by the Prosecution during these 5 or 6 months: namely, the words 'Destruction of Poland, main objective… Aim: elimination of vital forces, not arrival at a certain line.' These words were not spoken, and such a war aim the German commanders-in-chief would not have agreed to. For that reason it is important to ascertain whether this document is genuine.
>
> In this connection, may I remind the Court that there is a third version of this speech as mentioned in this courtroom – namely Document L-3, which is even worse than these and which was published by the press of the whole world. Wherever one spoke to anyone, this grotesque and brutal speech was brought up. For that reason it is in the interest of historical truth to ascertain whether Hitler spoke in this shocking way at this time. Actually, I admit he used many expressions which were severe, but he did not use such words, and this is of tremendous significance for the reputation of all the commanders who were present.
>
> Let me point out the next words. They say expressly, 'close your hearts against pity, brutal measures.' Such words were not used."[1519]

Thereupon, Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, prosecution counsel, stated:

> "We cannot go into intrinsic comparisons to decide the admissibility of the document."

And the court's President thus decided:

> "It is a document in German, captured among German documents... The application to strike out Document 1014-PS is denied."

Grand Admiral Raeder stated the following:

> "DR. SIEMERS: In the version of the speech Document 798-PS or Exhibit USA-29 it says verbatim: 'I am only afraid that at the last moment some swine will offer me some plan of arbitration.' Were those words used in the speech at that time?
>
> RAEDER: In my recollection, certainly not. The Führer was not accustomed to using expressions like that in speeches which he made to the generals."[1520]

General Admiral Hermann Boehm swore an affidavit before the IMT that neither the sentence referring to the plan of arbitration nor the one about destroying England's hegemony were ever spoken. It was a question of inventions, pure and simple, just like the word "swine."[1521]

Field Marshal Erich von Manstein:

> "Hitler's speech on this occasion was the subject of various prosecution 'documents' at the Nuremberg trial [of the General Staff]…
>
> All this is quite untrue. It is equally untrue that Hitler said anything about 'his only fear being a last-minute offer of mediation from some pig-dog or other.'"[1522]

Grand Admiral Raeder described the "Boehm version" (Document Raeder 27) which also does not constitute any minutes taken and also has no counter-signature, out of the three versions as "that one which corresponds most closely to reality." [1520]

While already origin and contents of “doc. 798-PS” and “1014-PS” have been disguised or rather falsified in rather an amateurish way, a comparison with the Boehm report (doc. Raeder 27) shows, how the “accounts giving the gist,” by omitting important ideas and concepts and by adding obscure material, have been formulated in such a way that from their distorted meaning the intention is becoming rather too obvious: to have here, at last, a “document” that is a whopping big confirmation of the Allied war propaganda theses: the theses about the unprovoked “conspiracy against world peace.”

As example, two comparisons:

1. Example

Document Raeder-27 (signed Boehm):

> “The view held then in spring was still to put the resolution of the Polish question on ice, in order to deal first with the, in his opinion, unavoidable dispute in the west. However, as a politician one must not get tied to a rigid time sequence, but must remain elastic. The preconditions for his original intentions had changed. In any case, he never believed that Poland would keep to the Non-Aggression Pact in the event that Germany would be otherwise engaged. That is already indicated by the map [meant here is the map that was widely distributed in Poland in 1939, showing the Polish western boundaries to be at the Elbe river], but is especially noticeable from the press in the latter times, revealing the innermost thoughts of the Poles.”[1523]

Grand Admiral Raeder reproved the words “unavoidable dispute” and stated:

> “I am speaking here of an imminent dispute. An imminent dispute is not exactly something to strive for, it is rather to be feared.”[1524]

Doc. 798-PS turns that into:

> “I wanted to establish an acceptable relationship with Poland in order to fight first against the west. But this plan, which was agreeable to me, could not be executed since essential points had changed. It became clear to me that Poland would attack us in the event of a conflict with the west.”

Admiral Boehm stressed most emphatically on 13 June 1946 in an affidavit – and his testimony is confirmed by each and every historical evidence – that a turn of phrase expressing “offensive intentions towards the western powers” was never used, just as phrases like “My Polish policy hitherto was contrary to the views of the people” or: “Our enemies are little worms. I saw them at Munich.”[1525]

2. Example

Document Raeder-27 (signed Boehm):

"The conflict will be triggered with appropriate propaganda."

Document 798-PS turns this into:

"I shall give a propaganda reason for starting the war – no matter whether it is plausible or not."

a. The deposition doc. Raeder-27 (signed Boehm) is an assessment regarding a future contingency that bears in mind enemy actions, but makes no reference to any initiative on Hitler's part.
b. Why would Hitler have made incriminating statements of such magnitude before men whose passive resistance he is said to have recognised already for a long time?
c. It is a fact that Hitler's instructions to the German press, which, after all, are documentary material, have never been consulted as documentary evidence by the IMT, because they clearly refute the theories of these forged "documents." Only such documentation – *i.e.* a definite Führer directive to the German press ordering appropriate propaganda for starting a war – was considered to have any value for the court. Since 1945, these directives to the press have remained withdrawn from historical research – not without reason.

All the witnesses who testified under oath about this "address by the Führer" disputed, in more or less strong terms, the statements that were insinuated in the submitted "documents."

Field Marshal Keitel:

"When Hitler, towards the end of this speech, declared that a pact had been concluded with the Soviet Union, I was firmly convinced that there would be no war because I believed that these conditions constituted a basis for negotiation and that Poland would not expose herself to it."[1526]

Admiral Boehm:

"There never was talk of the destruction of Poland or the elimination of the active forces of the Polish people as such, but only ever to smash the Polish Armed Forces."[1527]

Colonel General Halder, former Chief of the German Army General Staff:

"The meeting ended with Hitler saying that Poland was isolated and that negotiations would be continuing…

Here [within the circle of those present] we were of the impression that the famous war of nerves would continue amid the favourable conditions created by Poland's isolation; no decision

was made."[1528]

Field Marshal von Leeb on Hitler's alleged decision for attack said regarding Poland: "No, quite the reverse!" Regarding the western powers he stated:

"You mean us? We should first have attacked the west? I know nothing about that."[1529]

Field Marshal von Küchler:

"It should be added that, as Colonel General Halder has already said, this meeting was taking place in full public view, that most of the participants were arriving in Salzburg by aeroplane, via Munich, that they travelled quite openly by car, wearing uniform, to and from the Obersalzberg, an area which in August was thronging with tourists. I considered the whole thing a big bluff."[1530]

Field Marshal von Manstein:

"As a result of Hitler's address neither v. Rundstedt nor I – and presumably none of the other generals either – concluded that war was now inevitable. Two factors in particular persuaded us that – as at Munich – there would be an eleventh-hour settlement.

The first was that the pact with the Soviet Union now rendered Poland's position hopeless from the start. If Britain, virtually deprived of the weapon of blockade, were compelled to take the bloody course of attacking in the west in order to aid Poland, it seemed likely enough that, under pressure from the French, she would advise Warsaw to give in. Similarly it must henceforth be clear to Poland that the British guarantee was now practically inoperative. If it came to a war with Germany, moreover, she must expect the Russians to take action in her rear with a view to accomplishing their old demands on her [Poland's] eastern territory [which Poland had annexed in 1921]. What else could Warsaw do in this situation but give way?

A further consideration:

Hitherto, on the military side, the intention to attack Poland had been camouflaged in every possible way. The presence of divisions in the eastern areas had been explained by the construction of an eastern rampart; and to conceal the purpose of the troop movements to East Prussia, an enormous Tannenberg celebration had been arranged. Preparations for big motorized troop manoeuvres had been going on until the very last moment. There had been no official mobilization. Though these measures could not possibly escape the notice of the Poles and were obviously intended as political pressure, they had still been enveloped in the greatest secrecy and accompanied by every form of deception. Yet now, at the very height of the crisis, Hitler had summoned every one of his senior commanders to the Obersalzberg – an action that could not possibly be concealed. To us, this seemed to be the climax of a policy of deliberate bluff. In other words, was Hitler not after all working for a settlement, despite his bellicose utterances? Was not this very conference meant to apply the final squeeze?

Such were the thoughts of Colonel General v. Rundstedt and myself as we left Berchtesgaden. While he travelled on ahead to our Neisse headquarters, I stopped on in Liegnitz for a further day with my family. This alone was a measure of my inner disbelief in the likelihood of an imminent outbreak of war."[1531]

Furthermore, the claim in these "documents" is also quite nonsensical that Hitler is supposed to have said (doc. 798-PS):

"One compromise solution suggested to us was that we should change our convictions and make kind gestures."

Yet, in reality, all of his foreign policy had been geared to compromise and generous gestures. During the last few days of August 1939, he was

waiting for a willingness for compromise from the others and, even at this point in time, still worked out a compromise proposal, whereas neither Great Britain nor France nor Poland had ever submitted, suggested or even only tolerated a compromise proposal in the German-Polish question. Quite the reverse, shortly after the Munich conference and on the suggestion of US-President Roosevelt, these countries had given up irrevocably on the policy of showing any inclination for compromise towards Hitler.

Another reason making this supposed utterance nonsensical is shown by the fact that Field Marshal Göring, immediately after this conference, once again brought in the Swedish mediator Birger Dahlerus, so as to make tentative moves towards peace with Britain, which had Hitler's fullest and unhesitating support.

All of the German Generals and Admirals who could testify about this meeting, rejected unambiguously the contents of doc. 798-PS and doc. 1014-PS and approved of, albeit with reservations, the version doc. Raeder-27 (signed Boehm).

It is indicative of today's "historians" that they publish these unsigned "documents" as "authentic reproduction" of Hitler's speech of 22 August 1939 and, what is more, without drawing attention to the fact that there is in existence still a third version (signed Boehm), "which corresponds most closely to reality," and without pointing out the contradictions and absurdities of the contents and without any reference to the statements made by those that had attended the meeting.

Even before the start of the war, the Allied atrocity propaganda against Germany had been trying to exploit this meeting. Or is it really feasible that a journalist from the Allied camp, on his own initiative, would have struck just the right note with these horror stories and to have chosen the subject with such unerring accuracy? Who, after all, would stand to gain from utilising the Führer's meeting at the Obersalzberg, which had not been kept secret from foreign journalists, for war-mongering? In any case, it is certain that the Berlin correspondent of the "Associated Press of America," Louis Lochner, did on 25 August pass on to the British embassy in Berlin the alleged contents of this secret Führer meeting. He claimed that a Staff Officer of the Wehrmacht who had received the paper from one of the Generals present at the meeting – the sources should not be disclosed – had handed him the composition. This very paper – could it have originated, for

instance, from a member of the German resistance? – found its way as "doc. 314" into the collection *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VII – with the description from the British embassy secretary Ogilvie-Forbes:

> "It is interesting and tallies in several details with information from other sources."

Since that time, this paper is therefore a "document." The contents of it are grotesque: (shortened version)

> "SS death-head formations in place with the command relentlessly and without compassion to send into death many women and children of Polish origin and language. Poland will be depopulated and settled with Germans. My pact with the Poles was merely conceived of as a gaining of time. As for the rest, gentlemen, the fate of Russia will be exactly the same as I am now going through with in the case of Poland. Then there will begin the dawn of the German rule of the earth. We shall continue to create disturbances in the Far East and in Arabia. I have but one worry, namely that some pig of a fellow ('*Saukerl*') will come at the last moment with proposals. He will fly down the stairs, even if I shall personally have to trample on his belly in the eyes of the photographers. I shall let a few companies in Polish uniform attack in Upper Silesia or in the Protectorate. Whether the world believes it is quite indifferent ('*scheissegal*'). The world believes only in success. For you, gentlemen, fame and honour are beginning as they have not since centuries. Be hard, be without mercy, act more quickly and brutally than the others. The citizens of western Europe must tremble with horror. I experienced those poor worms Daladier and Chamberlain in Munich…
>
> The speech was received with enthusiasm. Göring jumped on the table, thanked blood-thirstily and made bloodthirsty promises. He danced like a wild man…"

This account forces one to these conclusions:

1. The fairytale of the Gleiwitz radio station episode was concocted even before any incident had occurred that could be used for this legend of the "propaganda reason for starting the war, which Hitler is said to have promised to create,"[1532] to grow up around it.
2. The Allied war propaganda had started in peacetime already.
3. The origin of the "first person" format, as applied in the later forged account about this meeting, has, in all probability, been taken from this fabrication of atrocities from that time.
4. The IMT prosecution no longer paid any attention to this particular paper, because it apparently appeared too silly, even for them. But this did not stop them from accepting as evidence the somewhat toned-down versions which were presented as "originating from the captured German archives," although it was plainly obvious that, as regards contents, the later falsifications had been taken from the earlier forgery. One did have, after all, several "documents" – and the many "parallels" were bound to convey the "true core" of

Hitler's address! Who would ever dare to voice the suspicion of the "Supreme Tribunal" making use of three or, that is to say, four, or worse still, of forged "documents" in general? Such brazen-faced arrogance could not possibly be the actions of the judges of these "civilised and peace-loving nations"!?

Hitler's Address to the Commanders-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht
23 November 1939

This "document" also has the same typical flaws in format and contents that characterise the other "key documents" of the IMT prosecution: no date, no heading, no signature, so that here as well prerequisites for establishing a body of evidence elude the historian, and so there is actually nothing more to be said on the matter. But here as well is to be found an outpouring of transparently flimsy hypotheses of Allied war propaganda:

"The Sudetenland was from the start only a strategic and, what is more, only a partial solution."
"Conquest of the remaining Czech territory only starting point for a conquest of Poland."
"Building up the Wehrmacht always done with aggressive intentions in mind."
"The first and foremost fundamental decision to strike against the east and west."
"Pacts, however, are only held as long as they serve their purpose."
"I shall shrink from nothing."
"I want to annihilate the enemy." etc.

None of these postulates is tenable, historically speaking. Out of all the thousands of captured German documents, merely these obviously falsified papers are the only ones containing outrageous statements of that kind. All the genuine documents that were found and were withdrawn immediately from historical research, but were published years later in the *Akten der deutschen auswärtigen Politik* (ADAP), refute these statements.

Even the *Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst* (German Federal Centre for Regional Services) acknowledges in a book that "the text that we have" of this address is "uncertain," yet nevertheless it was published as "document" 798-PS in volume XXVI, pages 327-336, in the official text of the *Trial of the Major War Criminals*. The Chief of the General Staff of the German Army, Franz Halder, is quoted here as the only key witness, but even he does not agree with all the imputed statements and, otherwise, only calls

upon his memory.[1533] Halder was known to have been active in the resistance against Hitler and had been one of the initiators who wanted to arrest the Führer and Chancellor of the Reich already in 1938.

> "Of the four documents which we have examined we had to reject, from a dubious source analysis point of view, three of them and had to register doubts about the fourth…
>
> From an historical point of view the result is distressing, because what this example reveals is the fact that nothing of the historical findings of the International (Allied) Military Tribunal can be accepted without a further re-examination…
>
> Regrettably, not all historians have realised this. The result of this is the endeavour to write history according to the Nuremberg methods. This practice with its consequences will need to be thrown out along with the historical panorama of Nuremberg."[1534]

Appendices

The Czecho-Slovak Memoranda at the Paris Peace Conference 1919-1920

In order to understand the tensions after World War I arising between Germany and Austria on the one hand and the newly created state of Czecho-Slovakia on the other hand, one has to understand with which intentions this new country was planned and then created. I therefore quote here in part the Czecho-Slovak Memoranda as presented during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919-1920. Just like the Polish memoranda which have been treated to some extent in this book, they aptly characterise the mentality of the Czech leadership right after the war, which was still prevalent in the year 1938 – with the exception of the empty promises of a new "Switzerland" made in Memorandum No. 3, section VI., which were violated the very same day that state was established by violently suppressing spontaneous initiatives of the German ethnic minority for independence and by step by step implementing discriminatory measures against that minority.[1535]

Memorandum No. 2: The Territorial Claims of the Czecho-Slovak Republic

…These problems, which contain all the Czecho-Slovak basic issues, can be divided up in this way:

1. The question of the three principal provinces of the ancient crown province of Bohemia (*Böhmen*) that had always been Czech: Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

2. The rectification of the borders of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia at the expense of Germany and Austria.

3. The question of Slovakia, wrested by force from the Czechs several centuries ago, which had been separated artificially from Bohemia and is now reclaimed by the new Czecho-Slovak Republic in conformity with the nations' right of self-determination.

4. The problem of the Ruthenians of Hungary: In view of the particular geographical stratification of this question, we consider that the best solution would be to attach them to the Czecho-Slovak Republic.

5. The problem of the Czecho-Slovaks becoming connected with the Yugoslavs and the necessity to claim for the Czecho-Slovak Republic and the State of Yugoslavia certain areas, where the majority of the population is German and Hungarian.

6. To make international the following transport routes:

a) Elbe

b) Danube

c) Vistula

d) The railways Bratislava (Pressburg) – Triest and the railways Bratislava (Pressburg) – Fiume,

e) The railways Prague – Fürth – Nuremberg – Strasbourg.

7. a) The problem of the Czech population in Vienna, constituting almost a quarter of the number of inhabitants of the former Austrian capital, and who cannot be left unprotected in the hands of the Germans.

b) The question of the Wends of Lausitz, who are threatened with extermination by the Germans and whose lot imposes upon the Czecho-Slovaks, as their next of kin, the sacred duty to see to it that…

II. Rectification of the Boundaries of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia

If we put forward, as the basis of our territorial claims, the historical boundaries of our three provinces of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, this does not, then, rule out the possibility of annexing to this territory those neighbouring regions where a Czecho-Slovak population is living.

Such is in fact the case in four regions, of which two are in Prussian Silesia and two in Lower Austria.

In Prussian Silesia it is, first of all, a matter of a small area on the north-eastern border of Bohemia, in the vicinity of Glatz. In former times this area was entirely Czech. At present, a large part of it is Germanised. But these regions could still be saved. We demand their annexation to Bohemia…

VII. The Wends of Lausitz and the Czecho-Slovaks in Vienna

The Wends of Lausitz belong to a Slavic race which, by culture and language, is the closest to the Czech. They are the last remnants of the Elbe Slavs that had become Germanised during the course of history. Over a long period of time they had been joined to the Czech State and had become an integrated part of the same. Today they are 160,000 in number and are in great danger of being completely Germanised within a very short time. Their spiritual ties with the Czechs are very close, and it is a sacred duty for the Czecho-Slovaks, whom the people of Lausitz have always considered their natural protectors, to defend today before the Peace Conference the case of this unhappy nation, abandoned by all the world.

The territories inhabited by the Lausitz Wends are situated at the boundaries of Bohemia, Saxony and Prussian Silesia and include certain areas of the following districts: Lower Lausitz: Guben, Lübben, Luckau, Kalau, Cottbus, Sorau and Spremberg; Upper Lausitz: Lauban, Görlitz, Bautzen, Kamenz, Löbau and Zittau.

To demand their annexation to the Czecho-Slovak Republic could mean raising a problem, which is difficult to solve. Nevertheless, it is our unquestionable duty to protect them. Therefore, we must prepare at least a minimal program.

Memorandum No. 3: The Problem of the Germans in Bohemia

…

V. Political Reasons: the Germans of Bohemia Are Only Colonists

It must also be taken into consideration that the Germans in Bohemia are only colonists or descendants of colonists. For many centuries the various ruling houses had German colonists come to Bohemia in order to increase the revenue of the royal treasury…

VI. The Fate of the Germans in the Czecho-Slovak Republic

It is absolutely essential to know exactly how the Germans are treated in the Czecho-Slovak State. Not only is the Czecho-Slovak Republic prepared, if need be, to accept every international legal regulation established by the Peace Conference in favour of the minorities, but they are also prepared to go beyond such regulation, and to accord to the Germans all rights which are due to them.

The Czecho-Slovak Republic will be the very incarnation of a democratic state; all elections will proceed according to universal suffrage, directly and equally; all positions will be accessible to all citizens; minority languages will be admitted everywhere without exception; the right to have their own schools, their own judges and their own courts, will never be denied to whatever minority.

The Germans in Bohemia would have equal rights with the Czechoslovaks. German would be the second national language, and no repressive measures would ever be employed against the German part of the population. The regime would resemble that of Switzerland.

During the nineteenth century, they [the Czechs] kept much practical sense, but, above all, much political sense. Being far too much the “realists” and having far too much common sense, they have not failed to realise that acts of violence and injustice have been the reasons for the decline of Austria-Hungary, and that a similar policy would only be damaging for their own state and their nation.

Memorandum No. 8: Czech Upper Silesia

…

III. Economic Reasons

The Czecho-Slovak Republic lays claim to Upper Silesia above all for economic reasons. As an industrial state they need coal, in which Upper Silesia is very rich...

Memorandum No. 9: The Problem of the Glatz Region

The Czecho-Slovak and the Polish State cannot develop in full security as long as there exists between them a German enclave, which could obstruct direct communication between the cities of Prague and Warsaw, and which would furnish great strategic advantages to Prussia in case of attack against either of the two states. The Czecho-Slovak and the Polish State attach the greatest importance to ensuring that Prussia will not extend her territory south of the Neisse at Glatz and west of the Eulen mountains.

It would therefore be in the interest of the Czecho-Slovak and Polish State to solve such a crucial problem as that of the Glatz region. The majority of this territory is indisputably German. The Czechoslovaks demand a part of it.

Memorandum No. 10: Problems of the Rectification of the Czechoslovak and German-Austrian Frontiers

...

III. Rectification of the Frontiers with Prussian Silesia

We place particular importance in rectifying the frontier in the Riesen mountain range. The present border is indeed plainly disadvantageous to the Czecho-Slovak Republic. It runs over the peaks of the mountain range in such a way that the highest parts are in the possession of the Prussians, so that above all from a strategic consideration it would give to our enemies the possibility to exploit this against the Czecho-Slovak Republic.

V. Rectification of the Frontier with Bavaria

These rectifications are quite minor. They concern two spots and are requested for two reasons: the first one is the economic reason, on the strength of which we demand the town Furth-im-Wald, which has a

considerable Czech minority and which is also a railway junction of international significance.

The second rectification is requested for the same reasons as have been explained, when discussing the Riesen mountain range.

We demand that the Czech-Bavarian border be moved further into the mountains so as to avoid having the Germans on the eastern mountain heights and on the slopes of the Bohemian Forest, and in order to be safe from any possible attack.

The Czecho-Slovak Republic and their Right to Compensation for War Damages

Final Result:

1. Apart from their struggle for freedom, the Czecho-Slovaks have tried to support effectively the Allies in their terrible battle against Germany.

a) They had deployed three armies, in France, in Italy and in Russia, that have played an effective part in the fighting and have aroused general admiration.

b) They have, first and foremost, kept Siberia as a sphere of influence for the Allies, thus having achieved a basis for the re-establishment of Russia.

c) They have made the blockade of Germany possible by protecting these territories.

2. Today, the whole world recognises these contributions and realises the result of our actions. The leaders of the Allied nations have acknowledged these services on several occasions.

3. On the day of final settlement dealing with all the contributions made during the war, we appeal to these words in support of our claim.

VI.

… While the Poles had been exposed to invasion and devastation, which is an advantage for them regarding the right to have reparation, so we, for our part, have also suffered occupation, invasion and impoverishment; yet we, on the other hand, have proffered active collaboration to the Allies.

Furthermore, I want to state that all the inhabitants of Austria-Hungary (with the exception of our German and Hungarian enemies), *i.e.* the Yugoslavs, the Rumanians, the Italians and the Poles, would be in a comparatively better position than we, were our rights not recognised. Rumania will be indemnified, Serbia will be indemnified; likewise Italy and Poland are going to be indemnified, due to the fact that not only had certain parts of the old Austria-Hungary been invaded, but also their own territory.

If satisfaction were denied us, then it would be a case of all the other nations of Austria-Hungary being treated proportionally better than we are being treated – and we had tried to do everything possible within our power. We would be put on a par with the Germans and the Hungarians.

VII.

… We are undeniably a factor that has to confront the German threat (which continues to exist) in Central Europe, and that must also stand in the way of the push to the east, rather more in relation to the economical than the military sphere…

What alternative would we have, in view of our geographical configuration and our central position, if we are denied the prospect of becoming economically viable? It would not be worth the trouble to resurrect this nation if, straight away, one were to kill her by imposing on her financial and economic burdens of that kind. This would be a service rendered to our enemies, instead of being of help to us and the Allies.

France and England, above all, should understand this situation, having a direct interest in all the happenings in Central Europe. But the same applies to all our neighbours: it is in the interest of Italy, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Poland that we should not be a toy in the hands of the great German conquerors.

If Bohemia is not put on a strong enough footing, viewed from an economical and financial aspect, then the fight against Germany will not have achieved its purpose. Instead of reviving a nation, this nation would have been stillborn, and it would have been better not to have lent any assistance at her rebirth...

VIII.

The Czecho-Slovak State, which will have to confront an intense competitive economy and the German pressure in Central Europe, is going to face total bankruptcy if they are not awarded the right to be given reparations.

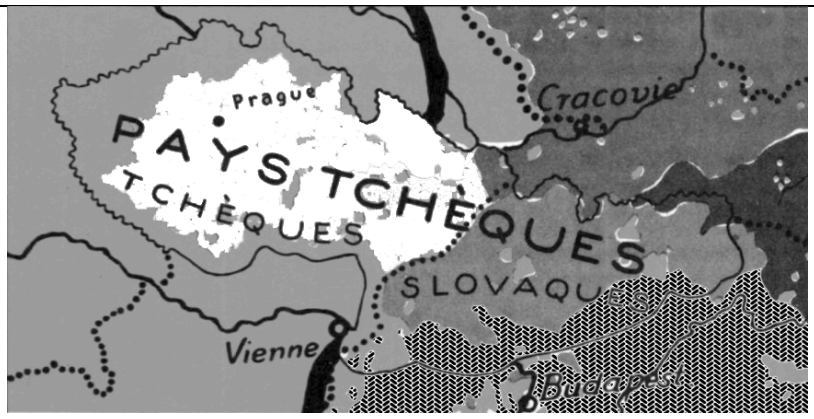
Escalating Czech Territorial Claims in Maps

The increasing Czech territorial claims over the course of the First World War can be portrayed by the original maps in the political journal *La Nation Tchèque* that was published monthly by Eduard Benes in 1915-1918. To illustrate the absurd nature of the claims, Benes' maps (here nos. 8, 10, 11) have been superimposed onto a map of ethnic majorities, showing where just borderlines should have been drawn, and were eventually drawn with the 1938 Munich agreement.

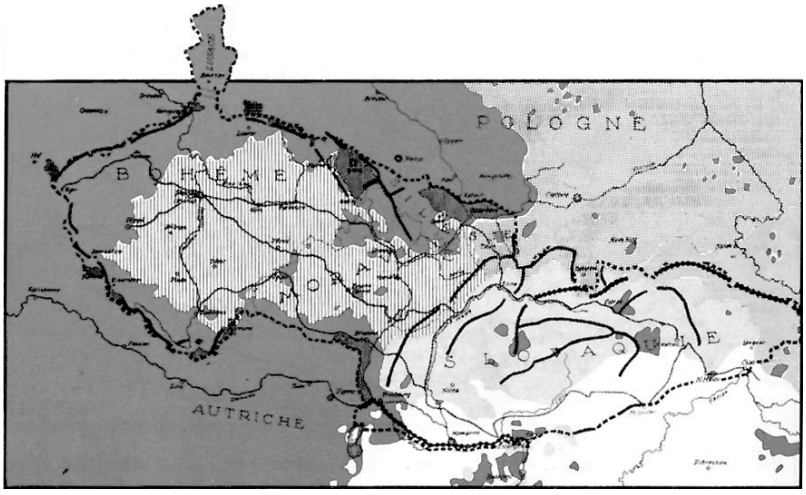
Map 8: *La Nation Tchèque; 15 November 1915 (vol. 1, no. 14) and 1 January 1916 (vol. 1, no. 17): Some of the original German names of the towns are still quoted as such. Dark grey= German population majority, light grey: Czech population majority; medium grey: Slovaks; white: Hungarians. Thick black line: suggested borderline to Germany, Austria and Poland; thick broken line: uncertain south-eastern borderline.*

Map 9: *On a map shown in La Nation Tchèque of 15 February 1917 (vol. 2, no. 20; below), most German names have been*

eliminated; the south-western borderline has been expanded or left open.



Map 10: *La Nation Tchèque; 1 September 1918 (vol. 4, no. 5): Now the Czech frontier runs just outside the gates to the south of Vienna. The thick lines are to divide Austria from Hungary in the South and Germany from Poland in the North, and in the original East Prussia has been generously added to Poland or Russia.*



Map 11: *The map of the territory claimed for a future Czecho-Slovakia submitted at the Versailles peace conference by the Czech delegation led by Eduard Benes. The demands (including a grotesque extension to the north into the Lausitz area) had increased again.*

Taken from: H. Raschhofer, The Czecho-Slovak Memoranda at the Paris Peace Conference 1919-1920

Statesmen and Diplomats in 1939

Germany

Hitler, Adolf	– Führer and Chancellor of the Reich
Ribbentrop, Joachim von	– Reich Foreign Minister 1938-1945
Göring, Hermann	– Field Marshall, Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe, highest ranking Officer of the German Wehrmacht
Weizsäcker, Ernst von	– State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry

Ambassador in	London	*Dirksen, Herbert von*
	Paris	*Welczek, Johannes Count von*
	Moscow	*Schulenburg, Friedrich Werner Count von der*
	Rome	*Mackensen, Hans G. von*
	Washington	*Dieckhoff, Hans*
	Warsaw	*Moltke, Hans A. von*
	Tokyo	*Ott, Eugen*

Chargé d'Affaires in		
	Moscow	*Hilger, Gustav*
	Washington	*Thomsen, Hans*

Danzig

Forster, Albert	– Gauleiter of the NSDAP (Head of State)
Greiser, Arthur	– President of the Senate
Burckhardt, Carl J.	– High Commissioner of the League of Nations
Chodacki, Marian	– Polish Commissioner General
Sheppard, Francis M.	– British Consul General

Italy

Mussolini, Benito	– Head of Government, Prime Minister, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces
Ciano, Galeazzo Count	– Foreign Minister (1936-1943)

Ambassador in	Berlin	*Attolico, Bernardo*
	Paris	*Guariglia, Raffaele*
	London	*Grandi, Dino Count*
	Moscow	*Rosso, Augusto*
	Washington	*Colonna, Ascanio Prince*
	Warsaw	*Valentino, Pietro Arone Baron*

Great Britain

Chamberlain, Sir Neville	– Prime Minister
Halifax, Edward W. Viscount	– Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Cadogan, Sir Alexander	– Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office
Vansittart, Sir Robert	– Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the Foreign Secretary

Ambassador in	Paris	*Phipps, Sir Eric*
	Washington	*Lothian, Lord*
	Moscow	*Seeds, Sir William*
	Berlin	*Henderson, Nevile*
	Warsaw	*Kennard, Sir Howard W.*
	Rome	*Loraine, Sir Percy L.* *Perth, Sir Eric, Earl of (1935-1939)*

Chargé d'Affaires in		
	Warsaw	*Norton, Clifford J.*

Poland

Beck, Jozef	– Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mosciki, Ignaz	– President of Poland
Skladkowski, Felician	– Premier Minister
Rydz-Śmigły, Edward	– Marshal of Poland, Inspector-General of Armed Forces
Szembek, Jan Count	– Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Arciszewski, Miroslaw	– Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador in	Berlin	*Lipski, Josef*
	London	*Raczynski, Edward Count*
	Paris	*Lukasiewicz, Juliusz*
	Moscow	*Grzybowski, Waclaw Count*
	Washington	*Potocki, Jerzy Count*

France

Daladier, Édouard	– President of the Council of Ministers
Bonnet, Georges	– Foreign Minister
Gamelin, Maurice	– Chief of the Army General Staff

Ambassador in	London	*Corbin, Charles*
	Berlin	*Coulondre, Robert*
	Moscow	*Naggiar, Paul-Émile*
	Warsaw	*Noël, Léon*
	Rome	*François-Poncet, André*
	Washington	*Doynel de Saint-Quentin, René*

Soviet Union

Stalin, Josef	– General Secretary of the Communist Party

Molotov, Vyacheslav M.		– People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs
Voroshilov, Klement J.		– People's Commissar for War

Ambassador in	London	*Maisky, Ivan M.*
	Paris	*Suritz, I. Z.*
	Berlin	*Merkalov, Alexei (to April 1939)* *Schwarzer, Alexander (from 2 September 1939)*
	Warsaw	*Sharonov, Nikolai*
	Washington	*Umansky, Konstantin*
	Rome	*Maisky, Ivan M.*

Chargé d'Affaires in		
	Berlin	*Astakhov, Georgi*

United States of America

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano		– President
Hull, Cordell		– Secretary of State
Welles, Sumner		– Undersecretary of State

Ambassador in	London	*Kennedy, Joseph*
	Paris	*Bullitt, William*
	Moscow	*Davies, Joseph E.*
	Warsaw	*Biddel, Drexel A. J.*
	Berlin	*Wilson, Hugh (recalled in November 1938)*
	Rome	*Philipps, William*

Chargé d'Affaires in		
	Berlin	*Kirk, Alexander C.*

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Notes

[←1]

With regard to the period preceding the Second World War, this pertains mainly to the minutes of British cabinet meetings and the correspondence between Roosevelt, Churchill and the Kremlin archives.

[←2]

Beginning with the sailors' revolt in Kiel, on 3 November 1918, armed rebellion spread to many cities throughout the Reich. Communist-inspired uprisings followed, one after another. To mention only the early ones: January 1919 in Berlin (156 dead in one week); March 1919 in Halle; general strikes and with revolutionary clashes in many cities of the Reich in 1919 alone (more than 1,000 dead); April-May 1919 in Munich: proclamation of the *Räterepublik* (soviet republic – esp. in Bavaria) (800 dead); March-April 1920 in the Ruhr area (in three weeks approximately 1,000 dead). At that time, nobody had heard of Hitler. H. Prinz zu Löwenstein, *Deutsche Geschichte,* p. 511.

[←3]

See G. Ludwig, *Massenmord im Weltgeschehen*.
For the sake of clarity, the place and the date of publication of the source material are recorded only in the bibliography.

[←4]

S. Hedin, *Amerika im Kampf der Kontinente*, p. 60.

[←5]

G. Moltmann, *Amerikas Deutschlandpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, p. 4.

[←6]

H. Lutz, *Verbrechervolk im Herzen Europas?* p. 98.

[←7]

An official relinquishment of the reparations has never been pronounced. 1932 saw the discontinuation of the reparations as a necessary outcome of the economic depression. In 1950,the Western Powers opened the matter again declaring that the German reparation obligations required yet another ruling. H. Prinz zu Löwenstein, *Deutsche Geschichte,* p. 511.

[←8]

Tägliche Rundschau, 11 May 1919.

[←9]

F. Nitti, *La Tragedia dell'Europa – che farà America?* pp. 13f.

[←10]

W. Jaksch, *Europas Weg nach Potsdam*, p. 214.

[←11]

E. Howard of Penrith, *Theatre of Life*, vol. II, p. 375.

[←12]

E.Viehaus, *Die Minderheitenfrage und die Entstehung der Minderheitenschutzverträge auf der Pariser Friedenskonferenz 1919*, p. 193.

[←13]

R. Grenfell, *Unconditional Hatred*, p. 84.

[←14]

Additional remarks in square brackets within quotations have been added by the author for clarification.

[←15]

K. Rabl, *Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker*, p. 97; H. Lebre and H. Coston in *Les Origines Secrètes de la Guerre 1939-45*, p. 17 (German ed., *Das Geheimnis um die Ursachen des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, 1958, p. 21).

[←16]

H. Lebre, *ibid.*, p. 96 (German ed. p. 110).

[←17]

Responsibility for foreign politics of the "Free City" of Danzig was eventually transferred to Poland. Danzig became a Polish customs district, with its railway under Polish administration. The port was freely accessible to Poland, open to Polish war- and munition-transport ships. For the rest, the League of Nations assumed the task of "protecting" the "Free City." The German Reich, on the other hand, was granted no rights whatsoever in this German city.

[←18]

Inhabitants before the First World War in Alsace:
95.2% = 1,136,056 Germans

4.8 % = 56,634 French
In Lorraine:
74.7 % = 439,066 Germans
25.3 % = 146,940 French
France annexed Alsace-Lorraine in 1919 without a plebiscite. When in 1871 the German government had a plebiscite held in Alsace-Lorraine, only 39,560 of the 1.5 million inhabitants made use of the option to declare themselves for France.

[←19]
G. Rühle, *Das Dritte Reich*, vol. 1933, pp. 169f.

[←20]
Unser Europa, Paris 1958 (published under the auspices of the Cultural Committee of the consultative assembly of the Council of Europe with the authorization of the Institut international des livres d'étude), pp. 132, 219-221 (contributions by Henry Brugmans, Rector of the Europa-Kollegs of Bruges, and Christopher Dawson).

[←21]
Th. Heuss, *Hitlers Weg*, p. 152

[←22]
C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 21 (German ed. only), pp. 16, 519 (English ed.).

[←23]
IMT stands for International Military Tribunal, although it ought to stand for Inter-Allied Military Tribunal.

[←24]
Dokumente der Deutschen Politik und Geschichte, vol. II, p. 190 (gist only of quotation).

[←25]
W. Ziegler, *Versailles*, p. 266.

[←26]
H. Sündermann, *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 41.

[←27]
V. Rothermere, *Warnings and Predictions*, p. 77.

[←28]
F.O. Miksche, *Unconditional Surrender,* p. 220.

[←29]
F. Nitti, *La Tragedia dell'Europa – che farà America?* p. 19.

[←30]
Ibid., p. 35.

[←31]
A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 77.

[←32]
V. Cowles, *Winston Churchill*, pp. 332f.

[←33]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book II, 'War in Twilight,' p. 328.

[←34]
The German magazine *Der Spiegel* reported on 10 February 1965 (p. 56): "A delegation of Jewish war veterans threatened German Ambassador Heinrich Knappstein that, if war crimes became subject to the statute of limitations, they would make their full influence felt, and would go all out to prevent a German reunification. 'The Germans,' reported the organisation's paper, *The Jewish Veteran*, 'were reminded of the effective boycott of German goods by our organisation in 1933. We are ready to repeat the same if necessary.'"; F. Berber, *Deutschland – England 1933-1939*, pp. 27, 98, 106; compare remarks p. 40, footnote 38.

[←35]
Grounds for this rejection – see p. 246.

[←36]
A. François-Poncet, *The Fateful Years: Memoirs of a French Ambassador in Berlin 1931-1938*, p. 123.

[←37]
F. Berber, *op. cit*., p. 53.

[←38]

R. Coulondre, *De Staline à Hitler, souvenirs de deux ambassades, 1936-1939*, p. 174 (German ed. p. 253), same statements by Lloyd George: J. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, p. 112.

[←39]

D.L. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 204. David Hoggan has been reproached by the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* for "falsifications" in his work. Although criticism may be appropriate for some isolated questions in his book, the fundamental source material testifies to the author's full acquaintance – unlike that of other historians – of the events that led to the Second World War. Therefore, a German historian cannot undervalue and cold-shoulder *The Forced War*, for the sources which Hoggan was able to consult in the USA are practically inaccessible to German researchers. Hoggan's statements quoted in *Truth For Germany* have never been questioned, up to now, by historical science.

[←40]

C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ost-Locarno-Problem 1919-1934*, p. 208.

[←41]

For datails of the German armament level see pp. 245ff.

[←42]

C. Tansill, *Back Door to War,* p. 317.

[←43]

G. Rühle, *Das Dritte Reich*, vol. 1933, p. 294.

[←44]

K. Wippermann, *Deutscher Geschichtskalender*, pp. 306f.

[←45]

G. Rühle, *op. cit.*, vol. 1934, p. 162.

[←46]

H. Frank, *Im Angesicht des Galgens*, p. 201.

[←47]

Ibid., p. 194.

[←48]
C. Bewley, *Hermann Göring*, p. 214.

[←49]
H. Frank, *op. cit.*, pp. 68f. (two exceptions: settlements with two party members).

[←50]
L. Schwarzschild, *Von Krieg zu Krieg*, p. 435.

[←51]
O. Winzer, "Twelve Years of Struggle against Fascism and War" (in Russian), pp. 51f.

[←52]
R. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 154. – "The terrible challenge that Nazi technology had presented to the free and civilized world."

[←53]
Kommunist, No. 2, February 1957, p. 60.

[←54]
Fr. Rück, *1919-1939: Friede ohne Sicherheit*, p. 333.

[←55]
C. Bewley, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[←56]
H. Mau and H. Krausnick, *Deutsche Geschichte der jüngsten Vergangenheit 1933-1945*, p. 91.

[←57]
H. Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

[←58]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[←59]
G. Rühle, *op. cit.*, vol. 1937, p. 47 (Hitler's Reichstag speech, 30 January 1937).

[←60]

Geschichtsfälscher – Aus Geheimdokumenten über die Vorgeschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges, p. 14.

[←61]

I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* Russian ed. p. 32, English ed. 1964, p. 36.

[←62]

In a front page article under the banner headline "Judea Declares War on Germany – Jews of all the World Unite in Action" and the two-column heading "Boycott of German Goods," the *Daily Express* (London) of 24 March 1933 wrote:

"All Israel is uniting in wrath against the Nazi onslaught of Jews in Germany.…

The appearance of the swastika symbol of a new Germany has called forth the Lion of Judah, the old battle symbol of Jewish defiance.

Fourteen million Jews dispersed throughout the world have banded together as one man to declare war on the German persecutors of their co-religionists.…

The Jewish merchant prince is leaving his counting-house, the banker his boardroom, the shop-keeper his store, and the pedlar his humble barrow to join together in what has become a holy war to combat the Hitlerite enemies of the Jew."

Pierre-Antoine Cousteau, *Les Origines Secrètes de la Guerre 1939-45,* p. 117 (German ed. p. 94).

Whether or not a worldwide Jewish organisation existed at the time – and it would hardly be an invention of the Germans – such a worldwide call to war, in reaction to the internal situation of another nation, presents all the features of a provocation for war.

[←63]

The absurdity of such an imputation is shown by comparing the areas held then by those world powers, who were quite openly stating their intent to world domination, with that of the German living space (see also Map 3, page 55):

Great Britain:	40 million square kilometres
Soviet Russia:	19 million square kilometres
United States:	9.5 million square kilometres
Germany:	0.6 million square kilometres

Winston Churchill wrote on 19 August 1939, in the London weekly *Picture Post* that Britain could muster in just a few days three-quarters of the entire population of the world against Germany. A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhundert*, p. 231.

[←64]

The author has analysed, in another volume, the question of the "final solution to the Jewish problem" which weighs heavily upon Hitler and Germany. Here it will suffice to note that no extermination program existed before the war, and that the war-time brutalities cannot be used as reason for pre-war politics. The "final solution" was not the first and only war crime, and historical research is still ongoing in this regard. Whoever wants to appraise the "final solution," must fathom the question of war guilt; must ask and answer the question as to who were the initiators of the expansion of the war; must deal with the aims of the war – and one must slot into place the judging of the first seven big war crimes and the numerous war crimes of lesser proportion within the chronological time perspective and according to moral principles, *i.e.* measure with the same yard stick. These big war crimes were:

1. The butchery of more than 20,000 ethnic Germans in Poland in September 1939.
2. The deportation and partial liquidation of 1.7 million Poles under Soviet domination from September 1939 to June 1941. Polish sources state that 400,000 were murdered by the Soviets during this operation; see M. Bardèche, *Nuremberg II ou les faux-monnayeurs* (German edition p. 49).
3. The murder of approximately 10,000 Polish army officers in the forest of Katyn in April 1940.
4. The partisan war, proclaimed by Britain, later by all the other Allies – from May 1940 onward.
5. The bombing campaign against the civilian population, started by Britain in May 1940.
6. The slaughter of thousands and forcible displacement of 128,000 people from the Baltic States – 1940 to June 1941.
7. The forced displacement of the entire Volga German population (600,000 persons), midsummer 1941.

In the meantime – since 1940 – the British government's Diplomatic Chief advisor, Vansittart, in his official capacity, was calling from London unceasingly for genocide. In 1941 appeared in the United States, with official approval, a book written by the president of the American peace league, Theodore Nathan Kaufman. This book was likewise calling for genocide in anticipation of the Morgenthau plan. Kaufman demanded the sterilisation of all the German people, and he had calculated that within a period of two generations the extermination of Germanism would be accomplished.

The "final solution" is to be placed chronologically according to this chain of events – beginning with autumn 1941, after the Soviet methods of warfare had been experienced. The subsequent big war crimes of the Allies, such as the expansion and the brutalizing of the war in general (these should be put in a prior position, chronologically speaking) and the bombing of the civilian population and the partisan war in particular, the Morgenthau plan, the expulsion of the East German people with the gruesome attendant circumstances, the bestial murdering of hundreds of thousands of disarmed German prisoners, especially in Eastern Europe, have not been given as reasons for the "final solution," but then they stemmed demonstrably from the same motives that already led to the first great crimes of war.

The killing of Jewish people during the war was a crime that nobody would want to deny. But it is equally undeniable that the way thereto had left a trail of crimes of such enormity and monstrosity perpetrated by the other side, which in this magnitude, perversity and centralized direction is unequalled in the history of mankind. One cannot condemn the one and conceal the other. Every judgment must go back, as already stated, to the question of war guilt.

[←65]

Roosevelt's speech to Congress, 4 January 1939; cf. p. 355.

[←66]
K. Ploetz, *Auszug aus der Geschichte* (1939), p. 655.

[←67]
J.G. Burg, *Schuld und Schicksal*, pp. 66f.

[←68]
C. Tansill, *op. cit.*, p. 588.

[←69]
S.J. Rosenmann, *The public papers and addresses of F. D. Roosevelt*, vol. 1944 -1945, p. 349.

[←70]
I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* p 55. (+ see Russian ed. p. 49)

[←71]
E. Hughes, *Winston Churchill – British Bulldog – His Career in War and Peace*, pp. 155f.

[←72]
Ibid., p. 146.

[←73]
Ibid., p. 145.

[←74]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book I, 'The Gathering Storm,' p. 113.

[←75]
See the chapter in the present work that deals specifically with this question.

[←76]
"Correspondence between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945" (in Russian), vol. I, p. 203; letter from Churchill to Stalin of 27 February 1944.

[←77]
H. Lutz, *Verbrechervolk im Herzen Europas?* p. 21.

[←78]
F. Rück, *1919-1939: Friede ohne Sicherheit*, p. 38.

[←79]
H. Lutz, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 259f.

[←80]
J.F.C. Fuller, *The Second World War*, p. 19; Herman Herda, *Die Schuld der Anderen,* p. 173.

[←81]
Viscount Templewood (S. Hoare), *Nine Troubled Years*, p. 386.

[←82]
A.C. Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* p. 13.

[←83]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

[←84]
Nation Europa, November 1957, p. 50.

[←85]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 140f.

[←86]
Ibid., p. 143.

[←87]
Ibid., p. 144, and L. P. Lochner, *Die Mächtigen und der Tyrann*, p. 214.

[←88]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.,* p. 167.

[←89]
P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder* (German ed.), p. 35. Statement by the renowned Anglo-American publicist Francis Neilson.

[←90]
E. Raczynski, *In Allied London*, p. 8.

[←91]
Winston Churchill, *Into Battle: Speeches 1938-1940*, pp. 42, 48, 50.

[←92]
C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 448.

[←93]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book I, 'The Gathering Storm,' p. 232.

[←94]
W. Churchill, *His Complete Speeches 1897-1963*, vol. VI, p. 6017.

[←95]
H. Grimm, *Warum – Woher – Aber Wohin?* pp. 583f.

[←96]
K. Hierl, *Im Dienst für Deutschland*, p. 163.

[←97]
H. Grimm in *Nation Europa*, February 1968, p. 68, quoting British General J.F.C. Fuller.

[←98]
P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder* (German ed.), pp. 74-77: Complete article reproduced.

[←99]
R. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins,* p. 782.

[←100]
T. Heuss, *Hitlers Weg*, p. 5.

[←101]
Ibid., p. 119.

[←102]
V. Rothermere, *Warnings and Predictions*, pp. 135-137.

[←103]
T. Heuss, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[←104]
Ibid., p. 58.

[←105]
H. Grimm, *Von der bürgerlichen Ehre und bürgerlichen Notwendigkeit*, p. 17.

[←106]
F. Lenz, *Zauber um Dr Schacht*, p. 17.

[←107]
Nation Europa, No. 6, June 1961, p. 40.

[←108]
G. Rühle, *Das Dritte Reich*, vol. 1935, p. 327.

[←109]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 142f.

[←110]
O. Abetz, *Das offene Problem*, p. 103.

[←111]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.,* p. 174.

[←112]
W. Churchill, *Into Battle: Speeches 1938-1940*, p. 49.

[←113]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

[←114]
Ibid., p. 178.

[←115]
E.J. Reichenberger, *Europa in Trümmern*, p. 130.

[←116]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

[←117]
E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[←118]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

[←119]
Ibid., p. 200.

[←120]
Ibid., pp. 78, 80.

[←121]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. V, book II, 'Teheran to Rome,' p. 338.

[←122]
E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

[←123]
H. Sündermann, *Alter Feind was nun?* p. 55.

[←124]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, vol. VI, book II, 'The Iron Curtain,' p. 343.

[←125]

E. J. Rozek, *Allied Wartime Diplomacy – A Pattern in Poland*, p. 359, and R. Grenfell, *Unconditional Hatred*, p. 135.

[←126]

F.B. Czarnomski, *The Wisdom of Winston Churchill*, p. 349.

[←127]

Winston Churchill, *His Complete Speeches 1897-1963*, vol. VII, p. 7251: Speech on 16 November 1945 in Brussels; also *The Sinews of Peace.*

[←128]

Ibid., Speech in Metz on 14 July 1946; also *The Sinews of Peace.*

[←129]

Ibid., Speech in Fulton, Missouri (USA), 5 March 1946; also *The Sinews of Peace.*

[←130]

E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 152f.

[←131]

Ibid., p. 239.

[←132]

F.J.P. Veale, *Advance to Barbarism*, p. 193, and M. Bardèche, *Nuremberg II ou les Faux Monneyeurs*, pp. 45f.

[←133]

R. Grenfell, *op. cit.*, pp. 104f.

[←134]

Voices of History, 1944-1945, Speeches and Papers of Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, Chiang, Hitler and other Leaders, p. 615: Churchill addressing the House of Commons on 15 December 1944.

[←135]

Die Jalta Dokumente, pp. 164, 171, 222, 298.

[←136]

F. Gause, *Deutsch-slawische Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, p. 288.

[←137]

Statistisches Bundesamt, *Die deutschen Vertreibungsverluste*, pp. 37, 44.

[←138]

E.J. Reichenberger, *Fahrt durch besiegtes Land*, p. 8: F.D. Roosevelt to former Czecho-Slovak President Benes, 12 May 1943.

[←139]

E.J. Reichenberger, *Wider Willkür und Machtrausch*, p. 400, quotes: *Review of World Affairs*, 5 October 1945.

[←140]

E. Spetzler, *Luftkrieg und Menschlichkeit*, p. 313.

[←141]

E. Deuerlein, *Die Einheit Deutschlands*, p. 34

[←142]

E.J. Reichenberger, *Europa in Trümmern*, p. 91, quotes: *Time Magazine*, 25 August 1941, p. 13.

[←143]

Die Jalta Dokumente, p. 266.

[←144]

C. Tansill, *op. cit.*, p. 588.

[←145]

S.L. Sharp, *Poland – White Eagle on a Red Field*, p. 193.

[←146]

E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, pp. 213, 240.

[←147]
E. Rozek, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

[←148]
E. Spetzler, *op. cit.*, pp. 341f.

[←149]
H. Sündermann, *op. cit.,* p. 126.

[←150]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. V, book II, 'Teheran to Rome,' p. 320.

[←151]
C. Reece, *Das Recht auf Deutschlands Osten*, p. 29: declaration of the Polish Ambassador to Washington, Jan Ciechanowski, 6 July 1945.

[←152]
Foreign Relations of the United States.– The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference), vol. I, p. 73.

[←153]
E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[←154]
Ibid., p. 268.

[←155]
Ibid., p. 321.

[←156]
Deutsche Verfassungen, Von Frankfurt nach Bonn, p. 62

[←157]
K. Ploetz, *Auszug aus der Geschichte*, p. 751.

[←158]

H. Andics, *Der Staat den keiner wollte*, pp. 504f.

[←159]
Ibid., pp. 530-532.

[←160]
K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 33.

[←161]
F. von Papen, *Der Wahrheit eine Gasse*, p. 460.

[←162]
Ibid., p. 463.

[←163]
Ibid., pp. 466, 476.

[←164]
ADAP (Akten der deutschen auswärtigen Politik), vol. I, doc. 297.

[←165]
Schmidt-Prozeß, p. 329.

[←166]
H. Sündermann, *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 132.

[←167]
A. v. Ribbentrop, *Verschwörung gegen den Frieden*, p. 154.

[←168]
A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, pp. 142-144.

[←169]
G. Brook-Shepherd, *The Anschluss*, p. 83.

[←170]

Ibid., p. 72.

[←171]
Ibid., pp. 90f.

[←172]
Ibid., pp. 84f.

[←173]
Ibid., p. 97.

[←174]
K. v. Schuschnigg, *Ein Requiem in Rot-Weiß-Rot,* p. 56.

[←175]
G. Rühle, *Das Dritte Reich*, vol. 1938, p. 60.

[←176]
K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[←177]
ADAP, vol. I, doc. 327.

[←178]
Europäische Politik 1933-1938 im Spiegel der Prager Akten, p. 101.

[←179]
K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[←180]
K.v. Schuschnigg, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[←181]
Ibid., p. 30 – In reality, England learned only "several days later" of the events of 12 February 1938 in Berchtesgaden: see I. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, pp. 184f.

[←182]
K.v. Schuschnigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 59f, 110f.

[←183]
G. Brook-Shepherd, *op. cit.*, pp. 72f.

[←184]
Ibid., pp. 81-84.

[←185]
Ibid., pp. 84f.

[←186]
Ibid., pp. 87f.

[←187]
Ibid., p. 93.

[←188]
Ibid., pp. 103f.

[←189]
H. Sündermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-136.

[←190]
K. v. Schuschnigg, *op. cit.* (German edition), pp. 111f.

[←191]
According to the Austrian constitution a plebiscite could be implemented only by a parliamentary resolution and the approval of the President. Schuschnigg disregarded this provision.

[←192]
P. Kleist, *Auch Du warst dabei*, p. 201.

[←193]

H. Andics, *op. cit.*, p. 550.

[←194]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.,*, pp. 146, 149.

[←195]
H. Sündermann, *op. cit.*, p. 152, and Schmidt-Prozeß, p. 578.

[←196]
K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[←197]
Ibid., p. 41.

[←198]
H. Sündermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-154 and Schmidt-Prozeß, p. 573.

[←199]
A. v. Ribbentrop, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[←200]
Ibid., p. 166.

[←201]
H. Guderian, *Erinnerungen eines Soldaten*, pp. 42-49.

[←202]
C. Bewley, *Hermann Göring*, p. 175.

[←203]
Der Spiegel, N° 47/1962, p. 112.

[←204]
P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder,* pp. 12f.

[←205]

K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[←206]

In 1938, Czecho-Slovakia's population was 15 million. Of these, there were over

7 million	Czechs
3.5 million	Germans
2.5 million	Slovaks
0.76 million	Hungarians
0.50 million	Carpatho-Ukrainians
0.11 million	Polish

[←207]

H. Roos, *Polen und Europa – Studien zur polnischen Außenpolitik 1931-1939*, p. 281.

[←208]

W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book I, 'The Gathering Storm,' pp. 237, 263.

[←209]

F.O. Miksche, *Unconditional Surrender*, p. 204.

[←210]

G. Bonnet, *Défense de la Paix. De Washington au Quai d'Orsay*, p. 202 (German ed., *Vor der Katastrophe*, pp. 69f.).

[←211]

Ibid., p. 140.

[←212]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 153.

[←213]

W. Jaksch, *Europas Weg nach Potsdam*, pp. 332f. (English ed., p. 326).

[←214]

V. Rothermere, *Warnings and Predictions*, p. 117.

[←215]
M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. I, p. 109.

[←216]
R. Coulondre, *De Staline à Hitler, souvenirs de deux ambassades*, 1936-1939, p. 151 (German ed., p. 219).

[←217]
R. Breyer, *Das deutsche Reich und Polen 1932-1937*, p. 141.

[←218]
H. Roos, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

[←219]
Ibid., p. 324.

[←220]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

[←221]
F. Gause, *Deutsch-slawische Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, pp. 271, 280.

[←222]
E.J. Reichenberger, *Wider Willkür und Machtrausch*, p. 77.

[←223]
Das östliche Deutschland – ein Handbuch, p. 169, and H. Raschhofer, *Die tschechoslowakischen Denkschriften für die Friedenskonferenz von Paris 1919-1920*, pp. 95f.

[←224]
F.O. Miksche, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

[←225]
F. Gause, *op. cit.*, pp. 271, 280.

[←226]

H. Mau and H. Krausnick, *Deutsche Geschichte der jüngsten Vergangenheit 1933 bis 1945*, p. 110.

[←227]

B. Celovsky, *Das Münchener Abkommen 1938*, pp. 104f.

[←228]

F. Gause, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

[←229]

R. Pozorny, *Wir suchten die Freiheit*, pp. 92, 180, 179.

[←230]

F. O. Miksche, *op. cit.,* pp. 190f.

[←231]

R. Pozorny, *op. cit.*, pp. 163, 208.

[←232]

K. Rabl, *Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker*, p. 119, and K.E. Freiherr von Türcke, *Das Schulrecht der deutschen Volksgruppen in Ost- und Südosteuropa*, pp. 537-679.

[←233]

W. Jaksch, *op. cit.*, p. 333 (English ed., p. 326).

[←234]

W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, vol. I, book I, 'The Gathering Storm,' pp. 238, 263.

[←235]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 40.

[←236]

E. Moravec, *Das Ende der Benesch-Republik*, p. 213.

[←237]

Ibid., p. 233.

[←238]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

[←239]
E. O. Miksche, *Unconditional Surrender*, p. 202.

[←240]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. I, doc. 156: the British Ambassador in Prague, Newton, to Halifax on 23 April 1938 concerning his discussion with Benes.

[←241]
ADAP, vol. II, doc. 38, p. 88, 87: Report of Eisenlohr, the German Minister in Czecho-Slovakia, to the German Foreign Ministry on 21 December 1937.

[←242]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. I, doc.150.

[←243]
K. Rabl, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 234.

[←244]
Ibid., p. 102.

[←245]
E. Benes, *Memoirs of Dr. Eduard Benes*, p. 34.

[←246]
H. Roos, *op. cit.,* p. 321.

[←247]
E. Benes, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[←248]
H.E. Barnes, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, p. 198.

[←249]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[←250]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 47, and A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 148, 151-155.

[←251]
P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder*, p. 13.

[←252]
P.H. Nicoll, *ibid.* (German edition), p. 48.

[←253]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[←254]
Ibid., p. 161.

[←255]
R. Pozorny, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

[←256]
E. Moravec, *op. cit.*, p. 241, and A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

[←257]
K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 49.

[←258]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 36.

[←259]
E. Kordt, *Nicht aus den Akten*, p. 227.

[←260]
E. Moravec, *op. cit.*, p. 242. – Moravec was a Colonel on the Czech General Staff.

[←261]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 56.

[←262]
A.I. Nedoresov, "The National Liberation Movement in Czecho-Slovakia" (Russian), pp. 37, 39.

[←263]
W.P. Bondarenko and P.I. Resonova, "The Anti-Fascist Resistance Movement" (Russian), pp. 95f.

[←264]
R.Jung, *Die Tschechen*, pp. 151f.

[←265]
W. Jaksch, *op. cit.*, p. 270, and *ADAP*, vol. II, doc.23, pp. 41-51.

[←266]
F. Hesse, *Das Spiel um Deutschland*, pp. 109f.

[←267]
M. Gilbert and R. Gott, *The Appeasers*, p. 126.

[←268]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 232, and I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* p. 81.

[←269]
"Documents and Materials on the Period Preceding the Second World War" (Russian), vol. I, pp. 220-238, especially pp. 232-234.

[←270]
A.I. Nedoresov, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 51.

[←271]
I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[←272]

R. Pozorny, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

[←273]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. II, doc. 1033, and K. Ploetz, *Auszug aus der Geschichte* (1939), p. 720.

[←274]

E. Moravec, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

[←275]

R. Pozorny, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

[←276]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. II, doc. 1031, 1035, 1044, 1046, 1047, 1049.

[←277]

Ibid., doc. 1033.

[←278]

I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

[←279]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. II, doc. 1068.

[←280]

G. Rühle, *Das Dritte Reich*, vol. 1938, p. 253.

[←281]

R. Pozorny, *op. cit.*, p. 307, 303.

[←282]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 237.

[←283]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[←284]

Frankfurter Allgemeine, 11 March 1959, p. 11.

[←285]

E. Moravec, *op. cit.,* p. 24.

[←286]

E. Benes, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[←287]

The implied assertions Hitler had driven Henlein to make ever more unattainable demands on the Czech government are not supported by any genuine proof. Hitler had not given any orders to Henlein before the incorporation of the Sudetenland. – cf. *inter alia* J. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, p. 207.

[←288]

E. Benes, *op. cit.*, pp. 28f., 27, 42.

[←289]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. II, doc. 888.

[←290]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 55.

[←291]

Ibid., pp. 75, 195.

[←292]

Ibid., p. 153.

[←293]

H.E. Barnes, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

[←294]

Ibid., p. 200. [That may have changed by now; editor's remark]

[←295]

Ibid., p. 165.

[←296]

"German White Book" No. 3 – *Polish Documents Relative to the Origin of the War*, doc. 6. These documents, as well as the remaining documents of the other German White Books, have never been refuted by historical research. These Polish documents have even been validated by Polish diplomats after the war; *e.g.* the Polish Ambassador in Berlin, Lipski, corroborated them – cf. H.E. Barnes, *op. cit.*, p. 184, note 292, and see D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, pp. 604f. The Polish Ambassador in London, Raczynski, wrote this in his memoirs *In Allied London*, p. 51: "20 June 1940
The Germans published in April a White Book containing documents from the archives of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, consisting of reports from Potocki in Washington, Lukasiewicz in Paris and myself. I do not know where they found them, since we were told that the archives had been destroyed. The documents are certainly genuine and the facsimiles show that for the most part the Germans had got hold of originals and not merely copies."

[←297]

K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, pp. 361f., 372, 353. – With this remark Chamberlain also acknowledged Benes' intention for war.

[←298]

W. Jaksch, *op. cit.*, pp. 318f. (English ed., p. 305).

[←299]

Ibid., pp. 331-333 (*ibid.,* pp. 322, 324f).

[←300]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 127.

[←301]

Ibid., vol. II, pp. 15f.

[←302]

W. Görlitz, "Griff in die Geschichte", *Die Welt*, no. 225 (27 September 1958).

[←303]

"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 269, p. 292.

[←304]
K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[←305]
P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, English ed., pp. 14f.

[←306]
Ibid., German ed., p. 56.

[←307]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 143.

[←308]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

[←309]
Informationen aus Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur (PKW), Düsseldorf, 8 December 1961.

[←310]
A. François-Poncet, *The Fateful Years: Memoirs of a French Ambassador in Berlin 1931-1938*, p. 273.

[←311]
F. Lenz, *Zauber um Dr. Schacht*, p. 45.

[←312]
D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 188.

[←313]
Ibid., p. 190.

[←314]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

[←315]
H. Dahms, *Roosevelt und der Krieg*, p. 42.

[←316]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 356.

[←317]
W. Jaksch, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

[←318]
AJ.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

[←319]
E.D. Miksche, *Unconditional Surrender*, p. 176.

[←320]
Ibid., p. 196.

[←321]
F. Durcansky, *Die slowakische Frage eine internationale Frage*.

[←322]
M. Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia 1929-1941*, vol. II, p. 214.

[←323]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 230.

[←324]
J. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, p. 289.

[←325]
N. Henderson, *Failure of a Mission*, p. 202.

[←326]
A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 203.

[←327]
ADAP, vol. IV, doc. 168.

[←328]

K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 60.

[←329]

Monatshefte für auswärtige Politik 1939 (Monthly Journal of Foreign Policy) No. VI, pp. 355f.

[←330]

ADAP, vol. IV, doc. 210.

[←331]

Ibid., doc. 189,190, 211.

[←332]

Ibid., doc. 215, 217.

[←333]

W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book I, "The Gathering Storm," p. 267.

[←334]

M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. I, p. 285.

[←335]

Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945, vol. V, doc. 71, 74, 79, 87, 94.

[←336]

Opposing statements, based on information contained in the *ADAP*, have been exposed as forgeries of the post-war period. See *Nation Europa* 5/1963 "Glatte Fälschungen" (Pure forgeries).

[←337]

G. Bonnet, *Défense de la Paix. De Washington au Quai d'Orsay*, p. 133 (German ed. p. 41).

[←338]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. II, doc. 986.

[←339]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, pp. 253, 213.

[←340]
H.E. Barnes, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, pp. 197f.

[←341]
Winston Churchill, *His Complete Speeches,* vol. VI, p. 5926: Speech on 14 March 1938, House of Commons.

[←342]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 426.

[←343]
Platanova, Pavlenko, Parotkina, "The Second World War" (Russian), p. 17.

[←344]
Vorobiev and Kravzov, "The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945" (Russian), p. 24.

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IMT, vol. XXXI, pp. 128f., doc. 2795-PS.

[←346]
F.O. Miksche, *Donauföderation*, pp. 29, 34, quoted by: E. J. Reichenberger, *Wider Willkür und Machtrausch*, p. 20; compare also: F.O. Miksche, *Unconditional Surrender*, p. 203.

[←347]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

[←348]
P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder* (German edition), p. 66.

[←349]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 413.

[←350]

Ibid., vol. II, p. 8.

[←351]

IMT, vol. VII, p. 210, doc. USSR-266.

[←352]

Frankfurter Allgemeine, 11 March 1959, p. 11.

[←353]

IMT, vol. III, p. 153, Mr. Alderman.

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Winston Churchill, *His Complete Speeches 1897-1963*, vol. VI, p. 6008: Speech in House of Commons, 5 October 1938; also *Into Battle.*

[←355]

"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 257.

[←356]

P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.* (German edition), p. 65.

[←357]

N. Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

[←358]

P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.* (German edition), p. 63.

[←359]

"We were anxious to bring things to a head": N. Chamberlain in a letter to his sister of 10 September 1939, quoted by K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 416.

[←360]

ADAP, vol. IV, doc. 223.

[←361]

K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

[←362]

O. Meißner, *Staatssekretär unter Ebert, Hindenburg, Hitler*, p. 476.

[←363]

E. Benes, *Memoirs*, pp. 53, 96f.

[←364]

Documents on International Affairs 1939-1946, vol. I, pp. 50f.

[←365]

IMT, vol. XXXI, pp. 139f., doc. 2798. PS.

[←366]

"German White Book" No. 3 – *Polish Documents Relative to the Origin of the War,* doc. 3, – Letter from the Voivode, Dr. Grazynski, to the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, 2 November 1938, about a conversation with M. Krulis Randa, one of the "most prominent Czech industrialists."

[←367]

Winston Churchill*, His Complete Speeches 1897-1963*, vol. VI, p. 6141: Speech on 28 June 1939 at the City Carlton Club, London; also *Into Battle.*

[←368]

P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.* (German edition), pp. 65-67.

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P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.,* pp. 17f.

[←370]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, doc. 278, 279, 285.

[←371]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 37.

[←372]
W. Recke, *Die polnische Frage als Problem der europäischen Politik*, pp. 286, 314f.

[←373]
H.G. Dahms, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg*, p. 19, and W. Recke, *ibid.*, p. 286.

[←374]
W. Recke, *ibid.*, pp. 291-354.

[←375]
S. Horak, *Poland and her National Minorities 1919-1939*, p. 36.

[←376]
F. Nitti, *La Tragedia dell'Europa – che farà America?* p. 17: statement of Georges Clemenceau, French Prime Minister and president of the Versailles Peace conference.

[←377]
H. Lutz, *Verbrechervolk im Herzen Europas?* pp. 94, 53: statement of General Smuts, Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa.

[←378]
F. Heiß, *Deutschland und der Korridor*, p. 122.

[←379]
W. Recke, *op. cit.*, pp. 291f.

[←380]

Ibid., p. 299, and B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, p. 156. The British Labour Party held several demonstrations outside the Polish embassy in London in protest of this policy.

[←381]

H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 4, quotes Wasilewski: "Joseph Pilsudski as I knew him," Warsaw 1935, pp. 171f.: Comment to his former adviser on Eastern problems, Leon Wasilewski.

[←382]

Seraphim, Maurach, Wolfrum, *Ostwärts von Oder und Neiße*, p. 39.

[←383]

C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem 1919-1934*, p. 10.

[←384]

F. Grimm, *Frankreich und der Korridor*, p. 34.

[←385]

L.L. Gerson, *Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland 1914-1920*, p. 128.

[←386]

F. Grimm, *op. cit.*, p. 37, and W. Recke, *op. cit.*, p. 344, and B. de Colonna, *op. cit.*, p. 90, and R.S. Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World-Settlement*, vol. II, p. 60.

[←387]

C. Höltje, *op. cit.*, p. 162, 164, 161.

[←388]

R. Martel, *Deutschlands blutende Grenzen*, p. 9.

[←389]

H. Bernhard, *Gustav Stresemann, Vermächtnis-Nachlaß*, vol. II, p. 546-547: Stresemann in a letter of 7 September 1925 to the German Crown Prince.

[←390]

Ibid., pp. 233-236, 248.

[←391]
C. Höltje, *op. cit.*, p. 103

[←392]
Ibid., pp. 209, 193.

[←393]
B. de Colonna, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

[←394]
Staatslexikon, Herder-Verlag, Freiburg 1931, 5th edition, vol. IV, p. 321.

[←395]
H. Grimm, *Warum – Woher – Aber Wohin?* p. 246.

[←396]
K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 247.

[←397]
D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 111.

[←398]
M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. I, p. 62.

[←399]
R. Grenfell, *Unconditional Hatred*, pp. 85f. (NY, June 1958).

[←400]
C.J. Burckhardt, *Meine Danziger Mission 1937-1939*, pp. 25f., and B. de Colonna, *op. cit.*, pp. 110f., lists further numerous foreign voices.

[←401]
R. Breyer, *Das Deutsche Reich und Polen 1932-1937*, p. 108.

[←402]
R. Goguel, *Polen, Deutschland und die Oder-Neiße Linie*, p. 411.

[←403]

E. Viefhaus, *Die Minderheitenfrage und die Entstehung der Minderheitenschutzverträge auf der Pariser Friedenskonferenz 1919*, p. 200.

[←404]

H. Laeuen, *Polnische Tragödie*, p. 11 (this refers to the Polish historians).

[←405]

W. Recke, *Die polnische Frage als Problem der europäischen Politik*, p. 296.

[←406]

Apart from a small area in the south west or rather in the west.

[←407]

W. Recke. *op. cit*, p. 300.

[←408]

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Prussian_plebiscite;
http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abstimmungsgebiet_Allenstein

[←409]

W. Recke, *ibid.*, p. 328.

[←410]

R. Dmowski, *Polityka Polska*, Pol. p. 491.

[←411]

W. Recke, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

[←412]

R. Dmowski, *op. cit.* p. , 200.

[←413]

W. Recke, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

[←414]

P. Roth, *Die Entstehung des polnischen Staates*, p. 44.

[←415]
W. Recke, *op. cit.*, pp. 318f.

[←416]
Ibid., pp. 320-322.

[←417]
H. Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars 1918-1941*, p. 320.

[←418]
P. Roth, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

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F. Grimm, *Frankreich und der Korridor*, p. 92.

[←420]
C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem 1919-1934*, p. 136, quotes a speech given by Reich Foreign Minister J. Curtius.

[←421]
H. Laeuen, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

[←422]
H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 4.

[←423]
O. Wagner, *Der slawische Vorstoß nach dem deutschen Osten*, p. 31.

[←424]
Ibid., p. 36, quotes J. Giertych, *Pól wieku Polskiej polityki* ("Half a century of Polish politics"), 1947, and R. Dmowski, *Polityka Polski i odbudowanie Panstwa*, Hannover, 1947 ("Poland's politics and the rebuilding of the State").

[←425]

Ibid., p. 11; instructions of Marshal Pilsudski to Foreign Minister Wasilewski, sent to Paris in 1919.

[←426]

H. Laeuen, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

[←427]

K.S. v. Galera, *Geschichte unserer Zeit*, vol. VI, p. 172.

[←428]

C. Höltje, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

[←429]

Ibid., pp. 137, 141; quotes René Martel, *Deutschlands blutende Grenzen*.

[←430]

B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, p. 90.

[←431]

H. Roos, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[←432]

Krupp-Prozeß Verteidigungsdokumentenbuch 2a Nr. 133 (Krupp trial: Documents for the Defence), book 2a, no. 133.

[←433]

C. Höltje, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[←434]

Ibid., pp. 157f.

[←435]

H. Roos, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[←436]

C. Höltje, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[←437]

West-Östliche Begegnung, no. 6, August/September 1959, p. 11, documentation: Karl-Heinz Fenske.

[←438]

"German White Book" No. 2, 1939, doc. 378: report of the German Ambassador von Moltke of 6 June 1939.

[←439]

W. Wagner, *Die Oder-Neiße Linie*, pp. 7f.

[←440]

Ibid., p. 9.

[←441]

D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 390.

[←442]

Ibid., p. 368 (German edition), and *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. IV, doc. 189, 306.

[←443]

W. Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 5f.
Examples: K. Kireski, *Pomorze Polskie (Pomerelia)*, Posen, 1928, p. 16;
G. Sappok, *Polnische Wunschträume*, Berlin, 1943, illustration 13;
S. Kozierowski, *Atlas der geographischen Namen des Westslawentums*, Posen, 1934-1938.

[←444]

Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945, vol. V, doc.126: von Ribbentrop's memorandum of 1 February 1939 about his discussions in Warsaw at the end of January.

[←445]

A. J. P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 196.

[←446]

D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

[←447]

G. Moltmann, *Amerikas Deutschlandpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, p. 111.

[←448]

L. de Jong, *The German Fifth Column in the Second World War*. p. 35 and *Das östliche Deutschland – ein Handbuch*, p. 496.

[←449]

H. Roos, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[←450]

S. Sharp, *Poland – White Eagle on a Red Field*, pp. 266, 150f.

[←451]

E. Raczynski, *In Allied London*, pp. 162f.

[←452]

Plainly this is to be understood as the rejected incorporation of East Prussia into Poland.

[←453]

E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

[←454]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 189, 306.

[←455]

H. Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

[←456]

H. E. Jahn, *Pommersche Passion*, pp. 233f., and S. Horak, *Poland and her National Minorities 1919-1939*, pp. 127-132, and B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, pp. 133-139, and K.E. Frhr. v. Türcke, *Das Schulrecht der deutschen Volksgruppen in Ost- und Südosteuropa*, pp. 165-280.

[←457]

“German White Book” No. 2, pp. 12f., doc. 7.

[←458]

G. Rohde, *Die Ostgebiete des Deutschen Reiches*, p. 126 and S. Horak, *op. cit.*, p. 136 and R. Breyer, *Das Deutsche Reich und Polen 1932-1937*, pp. 51f.

[←459]

K. Rabl, *Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker*, pp. 126f.

[←460]

Das östliche Deutschland – ein Handbuch, p. 496.

[←461]

B. Schumacher, *Geschichte Ost-und Westpreußens*, p. 285. Purchases were done primarily at the expense of the German properties and did not mean displacement of the Polish element.

[←462]

Ibid. This law retained the characteristics of a mere authorization and was practically only applied in four cases in the year 1912.

[←463]

F. Heiß, *Deutschland und der Korridor*, p. 159. In 1918 in Posen 47.8% of the land was privately owned by German people, 10.9% was in State ownership; in West Prussia 55% was in German private hands and 20.9% was owned by the State.

[←464]

B. Schumacher, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

[←465]

P. Roth, *Die Entstehung des polnischen Staates*, p. 136.

[←466]

K. Rabl, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[←467]

T. Bierschenk, *Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Polen 1934-1939*, p. 361.

[←468]

F. Heiß, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[←469]
H.E. Jahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 235f.

[←470]
K. Rabl, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

[←471]
P. Roth, *op. cit.*, pp. 57f.

[←472]
C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem 1919-1934*, p. 42 and S. Horak, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[←473]
"German White Book" No. 2, p. 19, doc. 10.

[←474]
F. Heiß, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

[←475]
T. Bierschenk, *op. cit.*, p. 351.

[←476]
F. Swart, *Diesseits und jenseits der Grenze*, p. 151.

[←477]
Ibid., p. 150.

[←478]
Ibid., p. 128.

[←479]
R. Breyer, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

[←480]
Ibid., p. 268.

[←481]
Ibid., p. 299.

[←482]
Ibid., pp. 306, 335.

[←483]
S. Horak, *op. cit.*, pp. 140f.

[←484]
L. de Jong, *The German Fifth Column in the Second World War*, p. 36.

[←485]
Ibid., p. 156.

[←486]
The Polish "observations" quoted here: markings on roofs, on chimneys and on the ground as pre-arranged signs for the *Luftwaffe*; alleged light, smoke and mirror "signals" were serving the same purpose. Special buttons, sweaters or scarves would have been identification signs for agents; disguised priests and monks would have operated secret transmitters of match-box size. L. de Jong, *ibid*., pp. 156f.

[←487]
Ibid., pp. 140f.

[←488]
H. Koch in *Der deutsche Osten* – Seminar papers on the First Eastern Seminar at the Hochschule für politische Wissenschaften (Institute for Political Sciences) Munich, 1956. pp. 28f.

[←489]
T. Bierschenk, *op. cit.*, p. 320 and "German White Book" No. 2, p. XVIII.

[←490]
Deutsche Arbeit 1939 issue, p. 326.

[←491]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 312 and vol. IV, doc. 151.

[←492]
T. Bierschenk, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

[←493]
R. Breyer, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

[←494]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 151 and P. Aurich, *Der deutsch-polnische September 1939*, pp. 22f.

[←495]
W. Hofer, *Die Entfesselung des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 28.

[←496]
K. Ploetz, *Auszug aus der Geschichte*, p. 758.

[←497]
E. Raczynski, *In Allied London*, p. 349.

[←498]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 245.

[←499]
L. de Jong, *The German Fifth Column in the Second World War*, p. 42 (footnote).

[←500]
E. von Weizsäcker, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 241f.

[←501]
H. Springer, *Es sprach Hans Fritsche*, p. 214.

[←502]
T. Bierschenk, *Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Polen 1934-1939*, p. 348.

[←503]
D. Hoggan *The Forced War*, pp. 111, 163.

[←504]
H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 395.

[←505]
M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. I, p. 410.

[←506]
D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, p. 260-261; A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, p. 39.

[←507]
ADAP, vol. V, doc. 51.

[←508]
"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 145.

[←509]
Ibid., doc. 349-450.

[←510]
Ibid., pp. XVIII, XIX. / English edit. pp. CXLII-CXLIV.

[←511]
S.L. Sharp, *Poland – White Eagle on a Red Field*, p. 151.

[←512]
L. de Jong, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[←513]
Ibid., p. 48.

[←514]
Ibid., p. 37.

[←515]
E. von Weizsäcker, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

[←516]
H. Lebre in *Les Origines Secrètes de la Guerre 1939-45*, p. 49 (German ed. p. 43).

[←517]
Ibid., p. 101 (German ed. p. 81).

[←518]
Ibid., p. 101 (German ed. p. 81).

[←519]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 88.

[←520]
Ibid., p. 240.

[←521]
"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 358.

[←522]
Ibid., doc. 408: Circular order of the Polish Regional Revenue Office of Graudenz, summer 1939.

[←523]
R. Breyer, *Das Deutsche Reich und Polen 1932-1937*, p. 262.

[←524]
Ibid., p. 296.

[←525]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 388.

[←526]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 612.

[←527]
T. Bierschenk, *op. cit.*, pp. 351f.

[←528]

F. Swart, *Diesseits und jenseits der Grenze*, p. 145.

[←529]

Die deutschen Vertreibungsverluste ("German casualties in the expulsion"), published by the Statistischen Bundesamt, p. 285.

[←530]

Ibid., p. 286.

[←531]

H.G. Dahms, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg*, pp. 45, 48.

In other sources are given 30-40 murdered ethnic Germans (minority Germans) before the outbreak of war and altogether, *i.e.* including the weeks after the start of war, 7,000 are quoted. The dispute over these numbers was only started after the war, when victors and co-victors were manipulating the German documents in their favour, when they withheld from German historical research undesirable documentations and when, among other things, they were in this way exerting their influence on German historiography. Nevertheless, Polish-Communist historiography could not avoid having to admit that these ethnic Germans were the first of the dead of the Second World War. The shamefulness of these facts is in no way effected by whether the victor will only admit to some thousand fewer victims than stated or whether the former German victor has inflated the extent of this horror. Experts of these happenings, at any rate, always make the point that the published figures are far too low and, above all, that they do not include those countless victims, which the German element in Poland has lost through Polish terror since 1919.
G. Rohde, *Die Ostgebiete des Deutschen Reiches*, p. 134 ;
W. Kuhn, *Osteuropa-Handbuch Polen*, p. 151;
K.M. Pospieszalski, *Sprawa 58,000 Volksdeutschow* (Polish);
S. Horak, *Poland and her National Minorities 1919-1939*, p. 135 (mentions 8,000).

[←532]

H. Roos, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

[←533]

B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, p. 132.

[←534]

A. Buckreis, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

[←535]

Seraphim, Maurach, Wolfrum, *Ostwärts von Oder und Neisse*, p. 43; P. Aurich, *Der deutsch-polnische September 1939*, pp. 5f.

[←536]

H.E. Jahn, *Pommersche Passion*, p. 243; further details thereafter, and P. Aurich, *op. cit.*

[←537]

L. de Jong, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[←538]

H. Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars 1918-1941*, p. 163.

[←539]

R. Dmowski *Upadek Mysil Konserwatywney w Polsce*, Warsaw 1914, p. 123, quoted in J. Ahlers *Polen*, Berlin 1935, pp. 70f., and D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, pp. 20f.

[←540]

D. Hoggan, *ibid.*, pp. 44-47.

[←541]

R.G. Vansittart, *The Mist Procession*, pp. 412, 468, 478.

[←542]

Krupp-Prozeß *Verteidigungsdokumentenbuch* 2a Nr. 47

[←543]

B. von Richthofen, *Deutschland und Polen*, p. 38.

[←544]

H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 6.

[←545]

Ibid., p. 38.

[←546]

C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem 1919–1934*, p. 39; B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, p. 387.

[←547]
H. Roos, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

[←548]
Post-war terminology for Hitler.

[←549]
Charges of the IMT-Nuremberg brought against Hitler and the NSDAP.

[←550]
W. Hofer, *Die Entfesselung des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, pp. 71, 76.

[←551]
Ibid., p. 128.

[←552]
D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, pp. 317-321.

[←553]
"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 208: 26 March 1939.

[←554]
Ibid., doc. 211.

[←555]
"Polish White Book" – Official Documents concerning Polish-German and Polish-Soviet Relations 1933-1939, doc. 86.

[←556]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 523.

[←557]
Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 524.

[←558]
"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 210.

[←559]
C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, pp. 510, 514.

[←560]
G. Bonnet, *Fin d'une Europe. De Munich à la Guerre*, p. 222 (German ed., p. 224).

[←561]
D.M. Projektor, "The War in Europe 1939-1941" (Russian), p. 35.

[←562]
G. Bonnet, *Défense de la Paix. De Washington au Quai d'Orsay*, p. 138 (German ed., p. 44).

[←563]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 368. The *News Chronicle* published an identical interview from Smigly-Rydz already on 19 July 1939; see A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, p. 193.

[←564]
K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 66.

[←565]
M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. III, p. 90; G. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, p. 277 (German ed., p. 252).

[←566]
J.E. Davies, *Mission to Moscow*, pp. 292f.

[←567]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 372.

[←568]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 597.

[←569]
K. Zentner, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[←570]
"Polish White Book," p. 5.

[←571]
According to Polish propaganda, Poland would be expecting a Polish victory in a referendum in West Prussia.

[←572]
N. Henderson, *Failure of a Mission*, p. 245, D. Hoggan, *The Forced War,* p. 741 (German ed.).

[←573]
The reasons for holding German-Polish talks are dealt with separately.

[←574]
D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, pp. 61f.,111.

[←575]
H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 395.

[←576]
M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. II, p. 43.

[←577]
G. Bonnet, *Fin d'une Europe. De Munich à la Guerre*, p. 249 (German ed., p. 41).

[←578]
Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945, vol. V, doc. 87.

[←579]
ADAP, vol. VI, doc. 4.

[←580]
G. Gafencu, *Derniers Jours de l'Europe*, pp. 56f.

[←581]
"Polish White Book," p. 5.

[←582]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 524 and 523.

[←583]

"French Yellow Book" – Le Livre Jaune Français, Documents Diplomatiques 1938-1939, doc. 75.

[←584]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, pp. 113, 118f.

[←585]

G. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, p. 172 (German ed., p. 196).

[←586]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 118.

[←587]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 113.

[←588]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 137.

[←589]

Ibid., vol. III, doc. 206.

[←590]

Ibid., vol. III, doc. 206.

[←591]

"German White Book" No. 3*,* doc. 11, p. 102 (English ed. p. 30).

[←592]

See also the events surrounding the "Tilea lie," pp. 297ff. of this work.

[←593]

K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 64.

[←594]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 579: Kennard to Halifax on 31 March 1939.

[←595]

W. Jedrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament 1939-1945*, vol. I, pp. 41f.

[←596]

Ibid., p. 48, and "Polish White Book," doc. 77, p. 112.

[←597]

"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 216.

[←598]

Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte, 1/1954, p. 88: G. Rhode, "Außenminister Joseph Beck und Staatssekretär Graf Szembek."

[←599]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 101.

[←600]

G. Rhode, "Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen und ihre neuralgischen Punkte" in *West-Ost Berichte* II/III, 1961, p. 97.

[←601]

G. Bonnet, *De Munich à la Guerre*, p. 277 (German ed.*, Vor der Katastrophe,* p. 252).

[←602]

C.J. Burckhardt, *Meine Danziger Mission 1937-1939*, p. 353.

[←603]

C.J. Szembek, *Journal 1933-1939*, p. 434.

[←604]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV doc. 605.

[←605]

D.J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy*, p. 36.

[←606]

G. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, p. 220 (German ed. p. 223).

[←607]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 249.

[←608]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, p. 702.

[←609]

C.J. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 318, and *ADAP*, vol. VI, doc. 771.

[←610]

M. Gilbert and R. Gott, *The Appeasers*, p. 247 and *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VI, doc. 236.

[←611]

Frankfurter Allgemeine, 31 August 1979, pp. 5f., quotes newly published files from the British Foreign Office, reference no. 0371/23020.

[←612]

C. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

[←613]

A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, pp. 127f., 164-167, 231.

[←614]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 394, 401.

[←615]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 36.

[←616]

R. Coulondre, *De Staline à Hitler*, p. 282 (German ed., p. 414).

[←617]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 9.

[←618]
H. Buchheim, *Das Dritte Reich – Grundlagen und politische Entwicklung*, p. 47.

[←619]
Posener Stimmen ("Posen Comments"), Lüneburg, March 1964, pp. 2f.

[←620]
D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

[←621]
G. Rhode, *Die Ostgebiete des Deutschen Reiches*, p. 134.

[←622]
C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem 1919-1934*, p. 43.

[←623]
D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 63.

[←624]
C.J. Burckhardt, *Meine Danziger Mission 1937-1939*, pp. 30f., 26f., 357.

[←625]
H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 296.

[←626]
C.J. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

[←627]
J. Szembek, *Journal 1933-1939*, p. 112 – comprehensive review of this book in *Nation Europa* 5/1959, p. 22.

[←628]

ADAP, vol. VII, doc. 188. – On 22 August Hitler cancelled the planned visit to Danzig of the cruiser "Königsberg."

[←629]

"French Yellow Book," doc. 188.

[←630]

"Polish White Book," doc. 86.

[←631]

D. Hoggan, *op. cit.,* p. 329 and 405.

[←632]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 248.

[←633]

M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. II, doc. 49, p. 122 – account of Beck's talks in London of 4 April 1939.

[←634]

O. Abetz, *Das offene Problem*, p. 101. – Abetz was appointed Ambassador in Paris after the armistice in 1940.

[←635]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 158: The British Ambassador in Berlin to his Foreign Minister on 22 August 1939.

[←636]

S.L. Sharp, *Poland – White Eagle on a Red Field*, p. 143.

[←637]

Michel Katalog (stamp catalogue) 1938 and "German White Book" No. 2, doc. 198.

[←638]

C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 523.

[←639]
"Polish White Book," doc. 77.

[←640]
"French Yellow Book," doc. 175.

[←641]
B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, p. 153.

[←642]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 293.

[←643]
"British Blue Book"- The Government Blue Book: Documents Concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities between Great Britain and Germany on September 3 1939, doc. 37.

[←644]
Ibid., doc. 38.

[←645]
"French Yellow Book," doc. 175.

[←646]
"British Blue Book," doc. 42.

[←647]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 14 and "Polish White Book," doc. 82.

[←648]
ADAP, vol. VI, doc. 774, note.

[←649]
"French Yellow Book," doc. 182 – statement by Beck on 7 August 1939.

[←650]

Ibid., doc. 185 and “German White Book” No. 2, doc. 448.

[←651]
W. Ziegler, *Wie kam es zum Kriege 1939?* p. 65.

[←652]
Ilustrowany Kurjer, 7 August 1939 ; *New York Times*, 8 August 1939.

[←653]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 585, 588.

[←654]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 15.

[←655]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 585.

[←656]
Ibid., doc. 588.

[←657]
Ibid., doc. 594.

[←658]
E. von Weizsäcker, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 244f.

[←659]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 20-21.

[←660]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 37.

[←661]
C.J. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

[←662]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 214.

[←663]

ADAP, vol. VI, doc. 771 – 4 August 1939 and doc. 773.

[←664]

"Polish White Book," doc. 86.

[←665]

ADAP, vol. VII, doc. 254 and doc. 232.

[←666]

As no record proving the contrary can be found in the Polish documentation and, since Veesenmayer, who is named in these *ADAP* files as signatory, was acquitted in the Wilhelmstraße trials 1946-1949 of charge no. 1 ("conspiring against peace") on the grounds that he "had no knowledge of Hitler's offensive plans," or rather, could not have had, raise doubts as to the authenticity of these documents printed in the *ADAP* (concerning Danzig during the last days of peace). "*Das Urteil (verdict) im Wilhelmstraßenprozeß,*" p. 43.

[←667]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 14.

[←668]

Ibid., p. 372. – Ambassador Lipksi on 31 August 1939.

[←669]

C.J. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 351, 299.

[←670]

S.L. Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

[←671]

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"Polish White Book," doc. 24.

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Archiv des deutschen Auswärtigen Amtes, series 52 a, 34476, quoted by D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

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ADAP, vol. V, doc. 54, and vol. IV, doc. 83.

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"German White Book" No. 3, doc. 7.

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On 10 October 1938 London announced plans for 16 army divisions, on 13 October plans for a volunteer national service register. Roosevelt informed the press on 14 October of an extensive naval and air force program and on 15 October of the supply of 400 military aircraft to Britain.

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H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 395, quotes J. Szembek, *Journal 1933-1939*, pp. 381, 386, 389f., 404.

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C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 519.

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"Polish White Book," doc. 45.

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Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945, vol. V, doc. 102.

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K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 60, and R. Breyer, *Carl Goerdeler und die deutsche Ostgrenze*, pp. 198-208.

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"German White Book" No. 2, doc. 211.

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A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

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"Polish White Book," doc. 77.

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Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 113.

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Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, Appendix 1, p. 798, M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 200.

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Ibid., vol. V, doc. 364 (4 May) and doc. 403 (6 May), M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 242, 256.

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Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 460.

[←712]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 231.

[←713]

D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, pp. 256f., 265. Point 13 of the Wilson Program reads as follows:

> "An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant."

Wilson announced his "program for world peace"on 8 January 1918. He understood "Poland's access to the sea" to mean that Poland use the Vistula and have a free port in Danzig. No politician of the former Western Allies and associate Powers would have imagined, at that time, a demarcation of the frontier in the shape of the later forcibly imposed "Corridor" by Poland.

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IMT, vol. X, p. 299265Engl..

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H. Sündermann, *Das Dritte Reich*, pp. 61f.

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Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 118.

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I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* p. 189.

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J. Szembek, *Journal 1933-1939*, p. 481.

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P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder* (German edition), p. 136.

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Ibid., pp. 147f.; cf. *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VII, doc. 455.

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M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 20.

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A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 217, 250, 215f.

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“Before 1938 Germany produced only the very light Mark I and Mark II tank — types which were outmoded soon after the beginning of war. Production of the Mark III began in 1938, and the Mark IV in 1939. In the last three months of 1939, Germany produced 247 tanks.”

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R. Goguel, *op. cit.*, p. 863.

[←928]
E. Rozek, *Allied Wartime Diplomacy*, p. 26.

[←929]
H. Lebre in *Les Origines Secrètes de la Guerre 1939-1945*, p. 46 (German ed., p. 41).

[←930]
O. Abetz, *Das offene Problem*, p. 103; E. Raczynski, *In Allied London*, p. 8.

[←931]
P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder* (German edition), pp. 121f.

[←932]
Ibid., p. 126.

[←933]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 122 (4 October 1938), doc. 282 (28 October), doc. 285 (1 November), doc. 288 (3 November), doc. 325: protocol of the talks between Chamberlain and Daladier in Paris on 24 November and of conversations in Paris on 2-3 December about aircraft production, inter alia; G. Bonnet, in *De Munich à la Guerre*, pp. 55f. (German ed., pp. 146-148), describes his own efforts for rearmament.

[←934]
P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[←935]
Ibid., p. 125.

[←936]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 285.

[←937]

W. Churchill, *His Complete Speeches 1897-1963*, vol. VI, pp. 6019f., also *Into Battle.*

[←938]

H. Lebre in *Les Origines Secrètes de la Guerre 1939-1945*, p. 48 (German ed., pp. 41f.).

[←939]

D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, pp. 194f.

[←940]

M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. I, p. 356.

[←941]

I. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, pp. 287f.

[←942]

P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

[←943]

K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 392.

[←944]

H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 378. Propagandist Sefton Delmer would write suchlike reports: See S. Delmer, *Black Boomerang*, New York 1962; here quoted German edition (*Die Deutschen und ich*), p. 390.

[←945]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 355f.; D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, pp. 240f.

[←946]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 285.

[←947]

C.J. Burckhardt, *Meine Danziger Mission 1937-1939*, p. 326.

[←948]

A. von Ribbentrop, *Verschwörung gegen den Frieden*, p. 296.

[←949]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, pp. 207, 209.

[←950]

A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, p. 34.

[←951]

P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 128 (in 1999 edit.), quotes: *The Times*, London, 23 January, 4 and 22 February 1939 and *HANSARD's Parliamentary Debates*: Commons, 31 January 1939.

[←952]

A. Buckreis, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[←953]

E. Hughes, *Winston Churchill – British Bulldog – His Career in War and Peace*, p. 168.

[←954]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 193 and 194.

[←955]

K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 456.

[←956]

R. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 113; J.F.C. Fuller, *Decisive Battles of the Western World*, vol. III, p. 375.

[←957]

"German White Book" No. 2, p. CXXXIV and doc. 257, 264, 265.

[←958]

I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* pp. 100f.

[←959]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 279; A.J. Toynbee in Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946, vol. X, p. 61.

[←960]

P.H. Nicoll, *Britain's Blunder* (German edition), p. 130.

[←961]

Tilea's verbal statement to Helmut Sündermann.

[←962]

P.H. Nicoll asserts to have looked at documents, according to which secret discussions between Vansittart and Tilea were held before this Tilea lie happened and that Tilea, in return for his services, was to personally profit by a British loan to Rumania for the purchase of British armaments – P.H. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-133.

[←963]

F. Lenz, *Nie wieder München*, vol. I, pp. 91-107; On 28 August 1939, Lord Halifax repeated this process of a telephone-transmitted bogus telegram in a matter of even more serious consequences, since in this manner he "fabricated" the Polish acceptance for negotiations. cf. the section "The Last Days of Peace."

[←964]

K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 392.

[←965]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, doc. 2: Chamberlain to the Polish Foreign Minister in London on 4 April 1939.

[←966]

K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 402.

[←967]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 207.

[←968]

D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 240.

[←969]

ADAP, vol. VI, doc. 6.

[←970]

I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

[←971]
I. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, pp. 295, 294.

[←972]
C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 454.

[←973]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 395.

[←974]
Ibid., doc. 399.

[←975]
Ibid., doc. 416.

[←976]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 400; F. Berber, *Deutschland – England 1933-1939*, p. 189.

[←977]
ADAP, vol. VI, doc. 131.

[←978]
Ibid., doc. 80: Report of the German Minister in Bucharest, Fabricius, to the Foreign Ministry on 24 March 1939.

[←979]
E. Hughes, *Winston Churchill – British Bulldog – His Career in War and Peace*, p. 168.

[←980]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

[←981]
W.G. Truchanovsky, "England's Foreign Policy" (Russian), p. 354.

[←982]

Ibid., p. 358; *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. V, doc. 285, p. 331 and doc. 589, p. 646.

[←983]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV doc. 448.

[←984]

Ibid., vol. V, doc. 2, 10.

[←985]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 551 (28 March 1939) and vol. V, doc. 278, 279.

[←986]

H. Roos, *Polen und Europa*, p. 395.

[←987]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 321.

[←988]

Ibid., doc. 312.

[←989]

Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 484.

[←990]

Ibid., doc. 489: 22 March 1939.

[←991]

I. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, p. 301.

[←992]

H.E. Barnes, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, p. 204.

[←993]

"German White Book" No. 3 – *Polish Documents Relative to the Origin of the War*, doc. 11: Report of the Polish Ambassador in Paris to Warsaw on 29 March 1939.

[←994]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 511.

[←995]

Ibid., vol. V, doc. 51 and appendix.

[←996]

M. Gilbert, R. Gott, *The Appeasers*, p. 236 (German ed., p. 188).

[←997]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 484; M. Gilbert, R. Gott, *op. cit.*, p. 235 (German ed., p. 187).

[←998]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 584; D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 338.

[←999]

Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 573. Compare the telegrams of the British Ambassador in Warsaw, emphasizing this Polish war psychosis already in the spring of 1939.

[←1000]

Ibid., vol. III, doc.137 and 206.Already in October 1938, Ambassador Kennard had alerted the Foreign Secretary to Colonel Beck's high-handedness and to the dictatorial order in Poland.

[←1001]

K. Zentner, *Illustrierte Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, p. 70.

[←1002]

E. Raczynski, *In Allied London*, p. 12.

[←1003]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, doc. 5.

[←1004]
Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 573.

[←1005]
Ibid., doc. 574.

[←1006]
W. Jedrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament 1939-1945*, vol. I, pp. 5, 23.

[←1007]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 583.

[←1008]
A. Rein, *Warum führt England Krieg?* p. 10.

[←1009]
E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[←1010]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 573.

[←1011]
Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 584 (Halifax on 31 March 1939).

[←1012]
C. Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem 1919-1934*, p. 67: Poincaré to Ambassador de Saint-Aulaire on 23 January 1923.

[←1013]
Foreign Relations of the United States – Diplomatic Papers – The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran 1943, p. 598:1 December 1943.

[←1014]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol I, book I, "The Gathering Storm," pp. 270-272.

[←1015]

W. Jedrzejewicz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 15f.

[←1016]

E. von Weizsäcker, *Erinnerungen*, p. 222.

[←1017]

This conclusion corresponded exactly to the remark by Halifax: "...one of these days he [Hitler] would find himself up against something that would not be bloodless." – *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. IV, doc. 279.

[←1018]

M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. II, p. 103; A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, p. 230.

[←1019]

H. Lebre in *Les Origines Secrètes de la Guerre 1939-1945*, p. 104 (German ed., p. 83).

[←1020]

B.H. Liddel-Hart, *Why Don't We Learn from History?* (German edition), p. 56.

[←1021]

R. Grenfell, *Unconditional Hatred*, pp. 86f.

[←1022]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 102.

[←1023]

J.F.C. Fuller, *The Second World War 1939-1945, A Strategic and Tactical History*, p. 23 (German ed., p. 18).

[←1024]

H. Dahms, *Roosevelt und der Krieg*, p. 30.

[←1025]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 212.

[←1026]

Ibid., p. 210.

[←1027]

E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

[←1028]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 212 ; *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. V, doc. 1, 2.

[←1029]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, doc. 2, 10: Record of conversations between Chamberlain and Beck in London on 4-6 April 1939.

[←1030]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 118: Report from Bullitt to Secretary of State, Hull, on 6 April 1939.

[←1031]

D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 351.

[←1032]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, doc. 275.

[←1033]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 161.

[←1034]

"German White Book" No. 3, doc. 14: Letter from the Polish Ambassador in London, Count Raczynski, of 26 April 1939, to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Warsaw.

[←1035]

S. Delmer, *Black Boomerang*; here quoted German edition (*Die Deutschen und ich*), pp. 390f. Cf. also "German White Book" No. 3, doc. 4: U.S. Ambassador Bullitt about German intentions to create a Ukrainian puppet-state, on 19 November 1938.

[←1036]

J. Stalin, *Fragen des Leninismus*, pp. 769f.

[←1037]

W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book I, "The Gathering Storm," p. 293.

[←1038]

"Documents and Materials about the Eve of the Second World War" (Russian), 1948, vol. II (Dirksen-archiv 1938-1939), p. 62. Message of the German Ambassador in London, von Dirksen, to the Foreign Office on 10 July 1939.

[←1039]

A. Buckreis, *Politik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, p. 85.

[←1040]

M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. II, p. 436.

[←1041]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 277.

[←1042]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 9, 138, 129.

[←1043]

C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, p. 514.

[←1044]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 460.

[←1045]

Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 547 and vol. V, doc. 163.

[←1046]

M. Gilbert, R. Gott, *The Appeasers*, p. 244.

[←1047]

A. Buckreis, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[←1048]

I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* p. 133.

[←1049]

"New Times" (Russian), Moscow 1962, Nos. 2, p. 29; 3, p. 26; 4, p. 26: I.M. Maisky, "On the Eve of the Second World War" and *ibid.*, No. 2, 1964, p. 22: I.M. Maisky, "1940 in England."

[←1050]

I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* p. 130.

[←1051]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 266, 272.

[←1052]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 129, 171, 150-152, 178.

[←1053]

I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.,* p. 110.

[←1054]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. V, doc. 278, pp. 304-306.

[←1055]

K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 405; M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. II, p. 178.

[←1056]

K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, pp. 318f.

[←1057]

Ibid., pp. 403, 408, 407.

[←1058]

I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

[←1059]

Halifax, *Fulness of Days*, p. 206.

[←1060]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. III, doc. 285.

[←1061]
G. Bonnet, *Fin d'une Europe. De Washington au Quai d'Orsay*, pp. 199f., 134f. (German ed., *Vor der Katastrophe,* pp. 69f., 42).

[←1062]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, vol. I, book I, "The Gathering Storm," p. 285.

[←1063]
I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.*, pp. 125f.

[←1064]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, pp. 284f.

[←1065]
I.M. Maisky, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

[←1066]
Ibid., p. 129.

[←1067]
D.J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy*, p. 36.

[←1068]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 90: Kennard to Halifax on 20 August 1939.

[←1069]
Rönnefarth, H.K.G., *Konferenzen und Verträge: Vertrags-Ploetz* (Ploetz-Treaties), pp. 171f.

[←1070]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 130.

[←1071]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[←1072]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 94.

[←1073]
Ibid., vol. III, pp. 96-124.

[←1074]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

[←1075]
D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 440.

[←1076]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

[←1077]
Ibid., pp. 415, 418.

[←1078]
Ibid., p. 417.

[←1079]
W. Jedrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament 1939-1945*, vol. I, p. 42.

[←1080]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

[←1081]
Ibid., pp. 394, 412, 418.

[←1082]
D.M. Projektor, "The War in Europe 1939-1941" (Russian), p. 35; A. Buckreis, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

[←1083]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VI, doc. 347.

[←1084]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

[←1085]

A. Buckreis, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

[←1086]

K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

[←1087]

E. Viefhaus, *Die Minderheitenfrage und die Entstehung der Minderheitenschutzverträge auf der Pariser Friedenskonferenz*, p. 208.

[←1088]

Die Jalta Dokumente, pp. 166, 171: Compare the geographic maps of Poland, well-known also in London, with the supposedly "historical boundaries of Poland" about which no objection was made by the British government: B. de Colonna, *Poland from the Inside*, pp. 160f.

[←1089]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 339: statement by Ambassador Henderson.

[←1090]

Ibid., vol. II, p. 200: the British Chargé d'Affaires in Warsaw, Norton, to William Strang, head of the Central Office at the Foreign Office.

[←1091]

ADAP, vol. II, doc. 191, p. 322.

[←1092]

Ibid., doc. 286, p. 481-2.

[←1093]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 15.

[←1094]

Ibid., vol. III, p. 261.

[←1095]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol.V, doc. 605.

[←1096]
D. Hoggan, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

[←1097]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 110: Kennard to Halifax on 16 February 1939.

[←1098]
Ibid., vol. IV, doc. 573.

[←1099]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 21.

[←1100]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 48.

[←1101]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 37.

[←1102]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 335, 365, 372.

[←1103]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 391.

[←1104]
E. Kordt, *Nicht aus den Akten*, p. 285.

[←1105]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 455.

[←1106]

L. de Jong, *The German Fifth Column,* pp. 148f.

[←1107]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 158: Henderson to Halifax on 22 August 1939.

[←1108]

Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 49: Henderson to Sir O. Sargent on 17 August 1939.

[←1109]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, pp. 355f.

[←1110]

Ibid., p. 392, Kennedy to Hull on 30 August 1939.

[←1111]

W. Jedrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament 1939-1945*, vol. I, pp. 152-155; "British Blue Book," doc.64.

[←1112]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 207; I. Colvin, *Vansittart in Office*, p. 301.

[←1113]

"Documents and Materials on the Eve of the Second World War" (Russian), vol. I, 1937-1938, pp. 226f.

[←1114]

W. Jedrzejewicz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 154.

[←1115]

E. Raczynski, *In Allied London*, p. 24.

[←1116]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 342.

[←1117]

Ibid., p. 341, Kennedy to Hull on 23 August 1939.

[←1118]

E. Raczynski, *op. cit.,* p. 22.

[←1119]

Ibid., p. 20; Raczynski's "right lines" meant rejection of every compromise; see p. 23 of his book.

[←1120]

Ibid., pp. 24, 23. – The last of the telephone calls regarding this was made typically enough on 3 September 1939 at 11 p. m. by Winston Churchill, who said: "From today I am First Lord of the Admiralty. If you should need me, I am at your disposal at any time," *ibid*., p. 30.

[←1121]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.,* p. 272; D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, pp. 605f.

[←1122]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. IV, doc. 110: Kennard to Halifax on 16 February 1939.

[←1123]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 117: Bullitt to Hull on 6 April 1939.

[←1124]

Ibid., p. 112: Kennedy to Hull on 5 April 1939.

[←1125]

Ibid., vol. I, p. 211: Biddle to Beck 11 August 1939.

[←1126]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 206, 227.

[←1127]

M. Gilbert, R. Gott, *The Appeasers*, p. 261. Cf. the draft treaty of 10 August 1939 in *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VI, doc. 613, particularly article 3, which also holds "economic penetration" to be a "menace to the independence of Poland."

[←1128]
E.J. Rozek, *Allied Wartime Diplomacy*, p. 205: Churchill on 22 February 1944.

[←1129]
"Correspondence between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill during the War 1941-1945" (Russian), vol. I, p. 193: Churchill to Stalin on 1 February 1944.

[←1130]
E. Raczynski, *op. cit.,* p. 24.

[←1131]
I. Colvin, *op. cit.,* pp. 125f., 135, 210, 234-237, 281, 315, 331f.

[←1132]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 91.

[←1133]
S. Hedin, *Amerika im Kampf der Kontinente*, p. 175.

[←1134]
E. Kordt, *Nicht aus den Akten*, p. 338.

[←1135]
H. Grimm, *Warum – Woher – Aber Wohin?* pp. 350, 441; S. Hedin, *op. cit.*

[←1136]
J.F.C. Fuller, *The Second World War 1939-1945*, pp. 26f.

[←1137]
E.J. Reichenberger, *Wider Willkür und Machtrausch*, p. 535.

[←1138]
K. Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 424.

[←1139]
C. Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, pp. 739f.

[←1140]

E.J. Reichenberger, *op. cit.,* pp. 114f.

[←1141]

R. Vansittart, *Black Record*, pp. 14f.

[←1142]

H. Lutz, *Verbrechervolk im Herzen Europas?* p. 4.

[←1143]

E. Hughes, *Winston Churchill – British Bulldog – His Career in War and Peace*, p. 203.

[←1144]

"Correspondence between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill during the War 1941-1945" (Russian), vol. I, p. 189.

[←1145]

R. Grenfell, *Unconditional Hatred*, pp. 98f.,135.

[←1146]

W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. IV, book II, "Africa Redeemed," p. 552.

[←1147]
E. Deuerlein, *Die Einheit Deutschlands*, p. 141.

[←1148]
Das östliche Deutschland – Ein Handbuch, p. 532.

[←1149]
W. Churchill, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, book II, "Africa Redeemed," p. 552, 553; – Churchill in the House of Commons on 22 February 1944 (Italics in the original).

[←1150]
G. Kass, *England und Deutschland von 1900-1958*, p. 97.

[←1151]
Ibid., p. 109.

[←1152]
Frankfurter Allgemeine, 15 March 1965, p. 3.

[←1153]
E.J. Reichenberger, *Wider Willkür und Machtrausch*, p. 334.

[←1154]
C. Tansill, *Back Door to War*, pp. VII-VIII, p. 40.

[←1155]
Department of State, *Peace and War – United States Foreign Policy 1931-1941*, p. 15.

[←1156]
M. Sering, *Germany under the Dawes Plan*, London 1929, pp. 64f., cited by C. Tansill, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[←1157]
J. Szembek, *Journal 1933-1939*, pp. 60, 58.

[←1158]
Ibid., p. 48.

[←1159]
C. Tansill, *op. cit.*, pp. 476f.

[←1160]
S.J. Rosenmann, *Working with Roosevelt*, p. 161.

[←1161]
E. Ludwig, *Roosevelt, Studie über Glück und Macht*, p. 242.

[←1162]
C.A. Beard, *American Foreign Policy in the Making 1932-1940*, p. 178.

[←1163]
J.T. Flynn, *The Roosevelt Myth*, p. 174.

[←1164]
Department of [U.S.] State, *op. cit.*, pp. 52f.

[←1165]
Lord Elibank in *Contemporary Review*, June 1955, "Franklin Roosevelt, Friend of Britain."

[←1166]
C. Tansill, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

[←1167]
H. Sündermann, *Die Pioniere und die Ahnungslosen*, p. 150.

[←1168]
E.E. Robinson, *The Roosevelt Leadership 1933-1945*, p. 241.

[←1169]
C. Tansill, *op. cit.*, pp. 407, 427f.

[←1170]

Foreign Relations of the United States 1938, vol. II, pp. 647f.; D. Hoggan, *The Forced War*, p. 101; H. Sündermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 164f.

[←1171]

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[←1323]
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[←1324]
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[←1325]
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[←1326]
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[←1327]
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[←1334]
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[←1336]
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[←1337]
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[←1338]
Ibid., doc. 435, 491.– Halifax refers to a "first-class German source." The suggestion that Dahlerus had transmitted this information, after having received it from Göring (footnote 1, doc. 435), would be unlikely, since Göring would hardly have presented the Swedish mediator with operative details of a planned German offensive against Poland. On the other hand, it seems reasonable to suppose that the British embassy in Berlin could have camouflaged in this way their real source in their communication. As it is, according to doc. 491, another "first-class German source" is mentioned.

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Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 495.

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[←1361]
Ibid., doc. 391.

[←1362]
One may recall his words from 25 August: "…any attempt to patch matters up had been out of the question." See: E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[←1363]
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[←1364]
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Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 470.

[←1366]
Ibid., doc. 512: 30 August 1939.

[←1367]
Ibid., doc. 357.

[←1368]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 357, 512, 608.

[←1369]
Foreign Relations of the United States 1939, vol. I, p. 367.

[←1370]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 4, 280, 357, 372, 539, 576; "French Yellow Book," doc. 218, 222.

[←1371]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 371.

[←1372]
"Polish White Book," doc. 98.

[←1373]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 473.

[←1374]
Ibid., doc. 475.

[←1375]
Ibid., doc. 435, 491.

[←1376]
Ibid., doc. 495.

[←1377]
Ibid., doc. 492.

[←1378]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 373.

[←1379]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 497; C.J. Burckhardt, *Meine Danziger Mission 1937-1939*, pp. 293, 317f., 322, 347.

[←1380]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 252.

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[←1385]
Ibid., vol. VII, doc. 539, 552, 566.

[←1386]
M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 318; *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VII, doc. 501.

[←1387]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 493; M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 336.

[←1388]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 455.

[←1389]
Ibid., doc. 504.

[←1390]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 514.

[←1391]
B. Dahlerus, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

[←1392]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 519.

[←1393]
ADAP, vol. VII, doc. 422.

[←1394]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 509.

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Ibid., doc. 532.

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Ibid., p. 398.

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Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 537.

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[←1410]

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[←1412]
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[←1413]
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G. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, p. 342 (German ed. p. 288).

[←1415]
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[←1416]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 539, 566.

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M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, doc. 142; W. Jedrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament 1939-1945,* vol. I, No. 46.

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[←1421]
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[←1422]
Documenti Italiani, series VIII, vol. 13, doc. 572, 574, 581, 584. – It emerges from volume VII of the *ADAP*, published in 1950 by the French, British and American authorities, that Hitler

only on 3 September, after Britain's declaration of war – thus too late – had been considering a reasonably positive reply to Mussolini, subject to certain preconditions. This version must be rejected as a falsification, even if it were only in that crucial documents of this period were excluded from publication.
For an historical-factual evaluation of these *ADAP* volumes, compare *Nation Europa* 5/1963, "*Glatte Fälschungen*."

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G. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, pp. 340f. (German ed. p. 287).

[←1425]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 693.

[←1426]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

[←1427]
F. Lenz, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

[←1428]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 589.

[←1429]
E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[←1430]
H. Holldack, *Was wirklich geschah*, p. 160, footnote.

[←1431]
Ibid., p. 163; *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VII, doc. 693.

[←1432]
"German White Book" No. 2, p. CLII; *ADAP,* vol. VII, doc. 476.

[←1433]

L.B. Namier, *Diplomatic Prelude 1938-1939*, p. 374 and *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, vol. VII, doc. 600 and 608.

[←1434]

"Polish White Book," doc. 147, p. 149.

[←1435]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[←1436]

ADAP, vol. VII, doc. 475.

[←1437]

A. von Ribbentrop, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

[←1438]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 387.

[←1439]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 632.

[←1440]

The time of day, *i.e.* 6.40 p. m., was personally confirmed to the author by Lieutenant-General Gerhard Engel, who had been in attendance, and thus a witness, when this order was issued.

[←1441]

ADAP, vol.VII, p. 479 – English ed.: appendix I, p. 569: The details given in this piece of data (it is not a genuine document with certified source-proof) require an in-depth examination with regard to its authenticity and cannot be accepted at face value; likewise, the same applies to the comment made by Field Marshal Erich von Manstein in his book *Verlorene Siege*, p. 23 (English ed., *Lost Victories*, p. 32) according to which the order reached him at 5 p. m.

[←1442]

M. Freund, *op. cit.*, vol. III, doc. 158, p. 397.

[←1443]

Ibid., vol. II, pp. 130f.; D.J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy*, p. 36; E. von Weizsäcker, *Erinnerungen*, p. 242.

[←1444]

H. Sündermann, *Alter Feind was nun?* p. 85.

[←1445]

A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

[←1446]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 628: Henderson to Halifax, 31 August 1939.

[←1447]

F. Lenz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 575.

[←1448]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 639 and 644.

[←1449]

A. von Ribbentrop, *op. cit.*, p. 507.

[←1450]

"British Blue Book," doc. 105.

[←1451]

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 280.

[←1452]

E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[←1453]

F. Lenz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 507: Analysis of Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons on 1 September 1939.

[←1454]
Suchlike snippets of information had been supplied to London already since 1934-35 with unceasing regularity. I. Colvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 125f., 135, 210, 234-237, 281, 315, 331f.

[←1455]
K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 416.

[←1456]
E. Raczynski, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[←1457]
Die Tat, Zürich, 26 November 1952; and I. Colvin, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

[←1458]
F. Hesse, *Das Spiel um Deutschland*, p. 210.

[←1459]
A.J.P. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 277f.

[←1460]
Nation Europa, 1/1954, p. 46.

[←1461]
I. Kirkpatrick, *The Inner Circle,* p. 144.

[←1462]
R. Fiedler, *Im Teufelskreis – Krieg ohne Frieden*, p. 151.

[←1463]
I.M. Maisky, *Who helped Hitler?* p. 127.

[←1464]
W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, book I, "The Gathering Storm," p. 291.

[←1465]
Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, vol. VII, doc. 762.

[←1466]

Winston Churchill, *His Complete Speeches 1897-1963*, vol. VI, p. 6152: Speech in the House of Commons; also *Into Battle*.

[←1467]

Documents on British Foreign Policy, vol. VI, doc. 395.

[←1468]

M. Freund, "Bis zur Stunde kein Friede," *Frankfurter Allgemeine,* 1 September 1959, 12 October 1963.

[←1469]

H. Lutz, *Verbrechervolk im Herzen Europas?* p. 73: Statement by Reich Chancellor [1919] Bauer (SPD).

[←1470]

Ibid., p. 53: Statement by Field Marshal and Prime Minister of South Africa, J.C.Smuts.

[←1471]

Ibid., p. 57: From the German counter-proposals to the Allies in 1919.

[←1472]

Ibid., p. 264: Statement by the former Italian Prime Minister Francesco Nitti.

[←1473]

F. Nitti, *La Tragedia dell'Europa – che farà America?* p. 17 (German ed., *Die Tragödie Europas – und Amerika?* p. 16) : Remark by French President Georges Clemenceau.

[←1474]

Ibid., p. 29 (German ed., p. 25).

[←1475]

Report on the International Conference on Military Trials, Washington, State Department, 1949, pp. 104-106, 303; quoted in *Nation Europa*, 2/1962, p. 45.

[←1476]

M. Bardèche, *Nuremberg II ou les Faux Monneyeurs*, p. 29.

[←1477]
Nation Europa, 5/1959, pp. 53f.

[←1478]
G. Moltmann, *Amerikas Deutschlandpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, pp. 114f.

[←1479]
R.T. Paget, *Manstein – His Campaigns and His Trial*, pp. 66f.

[←1480]
F. Utley, *The High Cost of Vengeance*, pp. 172-174 (162-181).

[←1481]
New York Times, 23 June 1941, cited by B.S. Telpuchovski, "The Soviet History of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945" (Russian), p. 39.

[←1482]
H. Lutz, *op. cit.*, p. XVII.

[←1483]
P. Kleist, *Auch Du warst dabei*, p. 400.

[←1484]
H. Herda, *Die Schuld der Anderen*, p. 181.

[←1485]
F.J.P. Veale, *Advance to Barbarism*, p. 176.

[←1486]
S. Boratünskij, "Diplomacy in the Period of the Second World War" (Russian), pp. 152-154.

[←1487]
A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 13.

[←1488]
H.E. Barnes, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, p. 536.

[←1489]

Hitler's determination for war is shown in numerous other "documents" and examples, in addition to the charges dealt with here. The author has treated these cases in separate works. See in *Nation Europa* 5/1961 and 5/1963, "The Gleiwitzer Station Incident"; *ibid*. 5/1963, "Outright Falsifications: Quarterly for Contemporary History versus Hoggan and Taylor" deals with:
– Operation "Green" – Plan of Attack on Czecho-Slovakia;
– Hitler's "Stirring-up" of the Hungarians against Czecho-Slovakia;
– Hitler's "Offering the Ukraine to Poland";
– The German Armament Level in 1939 – "Hitler's Secret Memorandum for the Second Four-Year-Plan."

[←1490]

T. Heuss, *Hitlers Weg*, p. 99.

[←1491]

K. Ploetz, *Auszug aus der Geschichte* (1939, appendix), p. 21.

[←1492]

P. Fabry, *Der Hitler-Stalin Pakt 1939-1941*; *Nation Europa* 11/1958; 9/1960*;* 10/1961 in regard to the Russian Campaign.

[←1493]

O. Abetz, *Das offene Problem*, p. 78.

[←1494]

H. Frank, *Im Angesicht des Galgens,* p. 39; P. Kleist, *Auch Du warst dabei,* p. 143; *IMT,* vol. X, pp. 232f. – Statement from J. von Ribbentrop.

[←1495]

G. Meinck, *Hitler und die deutsche Aufrüstung 1933-1937*, p. 236.

[←1496]

Festschrift for Herbert Kraus, *Mensch und Staat in Recht und Geschichte*, published by Göttinger Arbeitskreis, p. 445: Article by H.G. Seraphim, "Nachkriegsprozesse und zeitgeschichtliche Forschung."

[←1497]

IMT, vol. XLII, p. 229.

[←1498]

Ibid., p. 228, as well as vol. XXI, p. 382. In his book *Von der militärischen Verantwortlichkeit in der Zeit vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (p. 28), Hossbach mentions, contrary to his IMT declaration, that he had taken notes during the meeting, as also in his book *Zwischen Wehrmacht und Hitler*, pp. 217f.

[←1499]

IMT, vol. XXVIII, p. 355, doc. PS-1780.

[←1500]

IMT, vol. XIV, p. 35.

[←1501]

IMT, vol. XX, p. 567.

[←1502]

P. Bor, *Gespräche mit Halder*, p. 113.

[←1503]

F. Hossbach, *Zwischen Wehrmacht und Hitler*, p. 137

[←1504]

Colonel on the General Staff, Hossbach was also present in his capacity as Hitler's Chief Adjutant.

[←1505]

IMT, vol. IX, p. 306.

[←1506]

F. Hossbach, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

[←1507]

B. Müller-Hillebrand, *Das Heer 1933-1945*, vol. I, p. 39.

[←1508]

A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, p. 133, see W. Bross, *Gespräche mit Hermann Göring wärend des Nuremberger Prozesses,* p. 188 – The purpose of the address apparently was "to light a fire under the breeches of the generals, as their thinking was still

too much imprisoned in the narrow confines of the 100,000-army of men. Of course, they only knew of defence, of keeping-at-bay resistance, of complying with the armament conditions of the Versailles Treaty and of a policy of wait-and-see as to what the League of Nations would do should a neighbouring state attack."

[←1509]
H.A. Jacobsen, 1939-1945, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg in Chronik und Dokumenten*, p. 91.

[←1510]
IMT, vol. XIV, p. 38.

[←1511]
W. Warlimont, *Im Hauptquartier der deutschen Wehrmacht 1939-1945*, pp. 37, 46.

[←1512]
H.A. Jacobsen, 1939-1945, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg in Chronik und Dokumenten*, p. 93, also: *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, vol. VI, doc. 433.

[←1513]
M. Freund, *Weltgeschichte der Gegenwart in Dokumenten*, vol. II, p. 348.

[←1514]
IMT, vol. X, p. 359.

[←1515]
IMT, vol. X, p. 514.

[←1516]
IMT, vol. XX, pp. 570f.; H. Laternser in *Verteidigung deutscher Soldaten*, p. 29, quotes Hitler's words thus: "I would have to be a blundering idiot if, because of the wretched Corridor question, I would slither into a world war, just like the incapable men of 1914."

[←1517]
H. Laternser, *op. cit.,* p. 29; *IMT,* vol. XVII, p. 522.

[←1518]
IMT, vol. XIV, p. 64.

[←1519]

IMT, vol. XIV, pp. 45f. The terminology "Annihilation ...(of the enemy) main objective. Aim is the elimination of vital forces, not arrival at a certain line" corresponded word for word to Churchill's idea of war from 1939 onwards, and was apparently so familiar to the falsifiers of the German documents that they would, without a nuance of difference, impute these ideas to the German leadership, not taking into account that suchlike "cheap" machinations were bound to attract attention. Of course, no-one was talking about Churchill's idea of war at Nuremberg in 1945-1946.

[←1520]

IMT, vol. XIV, p. 48; E. Raeder, *Mein Leben*, vol. II, pp. 165-167.

[←1521]

Affidavit Generaladmiral Böhm, Exhibit Number Raeder-129; cf. *IMT,* vol. XVII, pp. 407f.

[←1522]

E. von Manstein, *Lost Victories,* p. 28.

[←1523]

IMT, vol. XLI, Raeder-27, p. 17.

[←1524]

IMT, vol. XIV, p. 67.

[←1525]

Festschrift für Herbert Kraus, *Mensch und Staat in Recht und Geschichte*, pp. 451f.

[←1526]

IMT, vol. X, p. 514.

[←1527]

Festschrift für Herbert Kraus, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

[←1528]

OKW-Trial, protocol p. 1863.

[←1529]

Ibid., p. 2415.

[←1530]
Ibid., p. 2772.

[←1531]
E. von Manstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 30f.

[←1532]
Compare the discussion of the Gleiwitz radio station incident ("*Gleiwitzer Senderaffäre*") in *Nation Europa* 5/1961; 5/1963.

[←1533]
E. Korsthorst, *Die deutsche Opposition gegen Hitler zwischen Polen- und Frankreichfeldzug*, p. 109.

[←1534]
Festschrift für Herbert Kraus, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

[←1535]
Source: H. Raschhofer, *Beiträge zum ausländischen öffentlichen Recht und Völkerrecht* (Contributions to Public Law Abroad and International Law), Berlin 1937, pp. 35, 37, 43, 79, 95, 101, 263, 267, 287, 293, 319, 325, 327, 331.